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*OUTLINES
OF THE
CHRISTIAN
MINISTRY*

WORDSWORTH





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THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

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THE OUTLINES
OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

DELINERATED

AND BROUGHT TO THE TEST OF REASON, HOLY SCRIPTURE, HISTORY,
AND EXPERIENCE; WITH A VIEW TO THE RECONCILIATION OF
EXISTING DIFFERENCES CONCERNING IT, ESPECIALLY
BETWEEN PRESBYTERIANS AND EPISCOPALIANS.

BY

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LONDON :
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1872.

TO

MY FELLOW-LABOURERS FROM SCOTLAND IN THE
WORK OF REVISING THE AUTHORISED
VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE FOLLOWING LECTURES ARE INSCRIBED,

IN TOKEN OF SINCERE ESTEEM AND AFFECTION,
AND IN FULL ASSURANCE THAT
HOWEVER THEY MAY SEE CAUSE TO DISSENT FROM THE
ARGUMENTS THEREIN MAINTAINED,
THEY NEVERTHELESS DESIRE,
EVEN AS I DO,
TO FULFIL THE PROPHETICAL INJUNCTION—

'LOVE THE TRUTH AND PEACE'

(Zech. viii. 19).

MAR 27 1995

PREFACE.

THE FOLLOWING LECTURES were written as they now appear, about three years ago ; and they were intended to have been delivered in the principal cities and towns of Scotland, especially at the seats of our four universities—Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrews. Several reasons, both of a public and private nature, concurred at the time to prevent the accomplishment of this design ; and it is not improbable that the publication would have been indefinitely postponed, or even abandoned altogether, had not the perusal of Professor Lightfoot's masterly dissertation¹ on ‘the Christian Ministry,’ (which, though it came out first in 1868, I did not happen to see till quite recently), revived my interest in the subject, and confirmed me in the conclusions at which I had arrived. My first impulse, on reading that

¹ Appended to his edition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.

essay, was to apply to the Professor with a request that he would allow it to be reprinted apart from the volume to which it belongs, with the view to its being used as a text-book by students of presbyterian denominations, as well as by ourselves; not as though I concurred—or expected Presbyterians to concur—in the representation of every particular point exactly as it there stands, but because I regarded it—and ventured to hope that their learned divines and theological professors¹ would also regard it—as, on the whole, an admirably competent and fair discussion of the important subject with which it deals. In short, I entertained the idea that the critical and, so to speak, scientific spirit of the Professor's essay—entirely in harmony, as it is, with the

¹ When the above was written, I had not read Principal Tulloch's article in the 'Contemporary Review' for the present month (January 1872), 'On the English and Scotch Churches,' nor was I aware that he had spoken of Professor Lightfoot's Dissertation in terms virtually the same as I have used. It gives me sincere pleasure to be able to anticipate his concurrence in the recommendation of it which I have expressed above. And when he admits, as he does in that same article, that now 'there are few wise

Presbyterians who do not see weaknesses in their own system arising from the disuse of episcopacy,' p. 236, I hail the statement as affording the very basis we require for a mutual understanding; and I reciprocate it by expressing my own belief, that there are few wise Episcopalian who do not see elements of strength in the presbyterian system which are wanting to their own. See also the statement of Dr. P. C. Campbell, Principal of the University of Aberdeen, quoted below, p. 92, note.

most advanced scholarship of the present day—its thoroughly accurate and profound research, its calm judicial tone, and above all, its transparent impartiality—leading the writer to distrust conclusions in favour of his own clerical position, rather than the contrary—would suffice to recommend it to all who desire to find some common ground, upon which the advocates of episcopacy and presbyterianism may look for the reconciliation of their mutual differences.

This, as I have said, was my first impression; but when I turned to my own MS. and began to compare it with the dissertation in question, without any undue predilection, I trust, for my own performance, I could not but see that, however inferior the latter might be in many respects, the more popular form into which it had been cast, as necessary for ‘Lectures’ to a miscellaneous audience, and still more its comprehensive practical character, leading me to speak of many most important matters with which the Professor had no call to deal, might tend to render its publication now not the less, but rather the more desirable, as a separate and independent witness in favour of conclusions which are *substantially* identical and common to us both. At the same time, I have not failed to give my reader the benefit of constant references to Dr. Lightfoot’s work,

wherever we traverse the same ground ; and I have carefully pointed out, I believe, every instance in which I have found that the view which I had taken is different from his.

And now it may be expedient to state shortly in this place what has been my intention and aim in these Lectures.

Their main purpose is, by a succinct but exact and exhaustive method, *first*, to enquire what may be presumed to be—and *next*, to show what has actually been—the probable will and design of God in regard to the constitution of the Christian Ministry.

In executing this purpose, there has been no desire to challenge the validity of ordinances administered otherwise than according to that constitution. It is not denied—on the contrary, it is most freely and joyfully admitted—that spiritual benefits may be—and have been—derived to those duly qualified to receive them under other systems. But, on the other hand, it is maintained, nevertheless, that, the Church being God's Institution, and God being, as the Scripture teaches, a God ‘not of confusion but of peace,’ in His Church no less than in His World, a conscientious and enlightened sense of duty should induce the true servants of God to conform themselves to the arrangements which He appears to have made

with the view to that result. More particularly, it is argued that the preservation and enjoyment of peace and order among Christians, (greatly as we all must regret their loss, and desire their return), *are not to be expected*, so long as a portion of the Church's organisation, which is so deeply rooted, as the Threefold or Episcopal ministry can be shown to be, in the history of the past, and which runs up so clearly, without any other form of ministry actually discernible, into apostolic times and into Scripture itself, is set aside and disallowed.

The author, therefore, has no wish to impose the conclusion which he has reached, as necessary or binding upon the conscience ; except so far as whatever is thought, upon sufficient grounds, to be subservient to the cause of peace and order in religion, and to be agreeable to reason, and to indications of a divine intention, fairly gathered from Scriptural rules and examples, and from the general practice of the universal Church, may justly be considered necessary and binding upon the conscience of those *who so think* ; though not of those who, upon the like, or, as they may suppose, better information, have been led to think otherwise. Only it is earnestly entreated, for the love of God and man, that 'the like or better information' may not be assumed without proof ; but

may be brought openly to the light of day, and submitted to the same close inspection which the writer challenges for his own argument. If indeed I had not, on my own part, sifted the whole question to the bottom with the utmost accuracy and conscientiousness of which I am capable—as in a matter of the gravest and most solemn importance to us all, socially, politically, and religiously—I could not have ventured to come forward as I do with such an appeal. For though I may appear to speak boldly and confidently, it must not be supposed that I am not keenly sensible of the extreme delicacy and difficulty of the task which I undertake, when I invite, for the most part, those whom I address to do that from which we are all of us naturally averse—viz. to reconsider the grounds of the position in which they find themselves (it may be, from accidental circumstances, or from inherited necessity, rather than from deliberate choice), and which they have hitherto perhaps been accustomed to regard with satisfaction, if not with confidence. As it is, there are two large classes of Christians in particular, who, I cannot but hope, will be inclined to look with some interest on this appeal, and endeavour to promote the end at which it aims. I mean, first, all who desire to maintain the public profession of our National Christianity through-

out Great Britain ; which is becoming daily more and more weakened through the continuance of our separations, especially the separation between our two National Church establishments : and, secondly, all who appreciate the necessity and the benefits of the Reformation in the sixteenth century ; the maintenance of which has also become imperilled through the same cause. A third, and I fear a rapidly increasing class, who point to our separations as an excuse for their distrust and practical rejection of all religion, may be expected, on the other hand, to regard the whole discussion with indifference, if not with scorn.

There is one other point upon which it seems necessary to speak before I conclude this Preface.

It has too often been the practice, on the part of the opponents of the threefold ministry, to press the advocates of it to conclusions which are as undesirable as they are unnecessary. Because we hold that such a ministry is, and, in view of the past history of the Church, must ever be, expedient, if not essential to unity and good order among Christians, it does not, therefore, follow that we insist upon it as ‘of divine right’ in the highest sense in which that phrase may be understood, or in the same sense in which the two great sacraments of the Gospel are of ‘divine right.’ The latter are imperative in consequence of the ex-

press and direct command of Christ Himself, while the former rests for its immediate sanction upon no such command, but upon the duty of order and unity in the Christian body—not in this or that portion of the body, but in the whole—as it has existed from the beginning and will continue to exist till the end of time. For my own part, on the one hand, I accept Professor Lightfoot's conclusions as amply sufficient and satisfactory when he writes as follows:—

‘If the preceding investigation be substantially correct, the threefold ministry can be traced to apostolic direction, and, short of an express statement, we can possess no better assurance of a divine appointment, or at least a divine sanction.’—Page 265. And again: ‘The form of the ministry has been handed down from apostolic times, and may well be presumed to have a divine sanction.’—Page 266.

On the other hand, I also agree with him that ‘the facts do not allow us’—certainly do not require us—‘to unchurch other Christian communities differently organised’: though I cannot forbear adding, that *the co-existence* of such different organisations, equally claiming to be ‘Churches,’ *in the same place*, has not come up in the course of the Professor's investigation, and appears to rest upon no sufficient human, as it certainly rests upon no divine authority. And further,

—though I do not believe that a single well-authenticated instance of merely presbyterian ordination is to be found in the records of the ancient Church,¹ —I agree with Dr. Lightfoot that ‘the general rule’ (p. 231, comp. p. 224) upon that point is all that we ought to plead for, and that sufficient grounds are to be discovered (without descending to post-Reformation times) in the nature of the early evidence itself—and I would add in the spirit which appears to have guided the primitive Church in dealing with the reconciliation of old and wide-spread differences—to induce us to suspend, so far as may be necessary, the obligation of the rule, if by so doing we can open a way for return to that unity which it was one great object of the rule to accomplish and secure. In a word, if we are to extricate ourselves out of our present position (which no earnest Christian can approve of, or feel to be satisfactory), we must look to the broad principles of the Gospel, and to its spirit of charity and brotherly love, which should suffice to remind us that God ‘will have mercy and not sacrifice,’ whenever sacrifice interferes with that higher law,

¹ On the other hand, it has to be assumed, on our part, that a distinct form of ordination was required from the beginning for each of the three

orders; which cannot, I believe, be proved till we come to the third and fourth centuries.

which is above *all* ordinances; and certainly, therefore, above such as cannot claim the obligation of an express command; which sacrifice could claim when the prophet Hosea was inspired to write those words. I am fully persuaded that if the bishops and councils of the primitive Church had been called upon to consider a case similar to that of presbyterian Scotland at the present day—a case of inveterate and widely-spread divergence from catholic usage—but a divergence accompanied all the while with most unquestionable exhibitions of true Christian character, and a most conscientious fervent desire to do honour to the written Word of God, they would have taken their stand upon those broad principles and that charitable spirit; provided they had reason to hope that such a course would serve to heal the separation, and would also tend to the better and more extensive observance of the suspended usage for the time to come. Upon this point I shall be prepared to speak more at length, and more definitely, if the proper season and occasion for my doing so should ever arrive. In the meantime let me recommend to the consideration of all my readers, both episcopalian and presbyterian, the following words of Antony Faringdon, which it would have been well for the Church of England if she

had taken for her guide at the time of the Restoration :—

‘The rules of discretion and spiritual prudence will teach us that thriving lesson—to lose something that we may gain the more ; to yield that we may overcome ; not to be overjust to ourselves that others may be won at the last to do us the more right ; not to stand upon credit and reputation when we plead for peace.’—Serm. lxxxii. (preached A.D. 1654), vol. iii. p. 400.

It was my endeavour to make each of the three Lectures complete, as far as possible, in itself, in consideration of the different persons who might be present on different occasions among the audience ; and it is possible that this may have given rise to somewhat more of repetition, or redundancy in the treatment of the subject, than would otherwise have been the case. Should the reader be conscious of such an objection, I must ask for his kind indulgence to forgive it.

Having now reached the twentieth anniversary of my consecration to the episcopal office, I feel that I am committing to the press what may not improbably prove my last legacy to my fellow-Christians ; and I earnestly pray that the Divine Blessing may

attend it, in proportion to the singleness of purpose with which I have laboured to make it not altogether unworthy to promote the great and all-important object at which it aims.

PERTH, *January 25, 1872.*

(*Conversion of St. Paul.*)

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OUTLINES
OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

LECTURE I.

IT WAS OBSERVED not long ago, by a writer in one of our leading journals, that ‘the few and feeble attempts which have been made to effect a union of Christians have almost all proceeded upon the assumption that there is some one Church which is destined to assimilate and absorb all the others;’ and it was added, ‘As long as this belief prevails our very endeavours after union will only tend to exasperate the spirit of division.’ Concurring as I do in the truth and justice of that remark, I desire, first of all, to disown and repudiate, on my own part, any such assumption.

Object of
the Lec-
tures.

I shall not indeed deny that one of my objects in these Lectures is to induce you to think less unfavourably of Bishops than many, I know, have been taught and are wont to think of them. I wish to be allowed to show you that there is much—very much—to be said, I do not mean for ourselves

personally, but for our office ; and that, not as it may be found in any special development, not as it exists or has existed in any one particular Church, but *in itself*. I wish, more particularly, to plead that, whatever may have been the delinquencies of our forefathers, either before or since the Reformation ; whatever may have been their delinquencies—and I am not here to extenuate them—they were no necessary part of the system itself ; and that we, their descendants, having been disestablished and disendowed for nearly two centuries, have now suffered enough on their account. But why do I wish, why do I come forward, to attempt this ? Not certainly with a selfish or contracted view to our own interests ; not certainly because I desire merely to uphold Prelacy, still less to assail or disparage Presbyterianism ; nor simply because, as a bishop of the Church, I am bound, so far as I may be able, to vindicate and promote what appears to me to be the truth : no ; but because the truth which I would seek to recommend is, I am persuaded, ~~no~~ less desirable for others than for ourselves ; or, to speak more plainly, because it is, in my opinion, of the utmost importance to the interests of us all—to our moral, social, political and religious interests, and, I will add, to the interests of the Gospel throughout the world—that the differences between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism should be reconsidered with a view to their removal, or adjustment upon sound principles ; in order to place religion in a stronger position against irreligion, and, at the same time, to place reformed Christianity in a stronger position against that which is still unreformed.

These, and no less than these, are the great objects which I have in view. And am I mistaken when I say that the circumstances, both of the country and of the time in which we live, are more than commonly suited to encourage us to make such an attempt ?

Scotland is the only country in Christendom in which an independent national Presbyterianism and an independent national Reformed Episcopacy are so intermingled that they can look upon each other face to face. Both in turn have been once and again in a position of State Establishment. Neither hitherto has been so fully and so permanently successful in that position, but it must have felt that it might, with benefit to itself, have borrowed something from the other. When the one has been weak the other has been strong, and in that which the one has most lacked the other has most abounded. Such is the advantage which we possess in comparison, for instance, with any of the countries upon the continent of Europe, in none of which a Reformed Episcopate is to be found, however much it may be desired by many ; though Episcopacy unreformed is to be found in all of them. And in regard to the advantage of the present time, we have recently been told upon high authority, that ‘the age in which we live is one of searching enquiry after truth.’ What, then, can be more suitable than that we should set ourselves to apply such an enquiry to the subject upon which our main difference has turned ; not as desiring to prove that one party has been in the right, and the other in the wrong, but as frankly admitting that there have been

Advantages
of Scotland
and of the
present time.

faults on both sides, and as simply desiring to ascertain the truth, in order that the truth, which alone *can*, through the blessing of God, may now at length reconcile our differences and reunite us to each other.

Necessity of Union.

It is nothing more than a truism to say, that division among the adherents of any cause is a certain source of weakness to that cause, and a hindrance to its success. Now, I trust, we are all adherents of Christianity, and most of us, if not all, adherents of Reformed or Protestant Christianity. As adherents of Christianity we require greater union, for its own sake, because unity among His disciples is prescribed by the Divine Author of our religion. As adherents of Reformed Christianity we require the same, in order that, presenting a united front upon true principles, we may be able to maintain and advance our position against the unabated aggressions of the Church of Rome, which, because it is ostensibly united, though upon false principles, is still found, in spite of its errors, to possess for many minds an attraction which, on account of our differences and divisions, we cannot boast.¹

¹ The following words were spoken by the Pope, March 20, 1869, in answer to an Address from a deputation of English Romanists: 'We must cultivate in a most especial manner the spirit of unity; for *in that lies our strength, and its want is the weakness of our adversaries.*' He repeated, 'Protestants are disunited; and our

strength in the difficulties we have to encounter lies in perfect union.' Compare with the above a recent statement of the Bishop of Ely: 'Union is vital to Christianity now; and if Rome alone in Western Christendom exhibits an united front, it will draw a much larger host of earnest hearts into it than it has ever drawn yet.'

And let us not be told that the truth which may lead to such a blessed and important result is either immaterial in itself or impossible to be ascertained. There are, I know, many, too many, who are inclined to hold one or both of these positions. For my own part, I cannot allow that anything whatever which tends, practically and directly, to create disunion between fellow-Christians and fellow-countrymen, and thereby to dishonour God by disobedience to His plain commands, and to give advantage to the enemies of true religion, can properly be regarded as of little or no importance. Neither can I admit that the difficulty of ascertaining the truth upon the subject before us is by any means so great or insurmountable as some would lead us to suppose,¹ if only we will undertake the enquiry in a proper spirit. We have all accepted the settlement of a question which in itself is far more difficult, far more impossible for any but men of learning and laborious research,—I mean, in regard to the books which constitute the canon or authentic volume of Holy Scripture,² a subject upon which all the Reformed Churches are agreed among themselves, but are not agreed with the Church of Rome. In like

The question important, an
not incapable of
solution.

¹ Take, for example, these words of Mr. Hallam, writing of Scotland in the seventeenth century: ‘The main controversy between the Episcopalian and Presbyterian Churches was one . . . little more interesting than those about the Roman Senate or the Saxon Wittenagemot, nor per-

haps more capable of decisive solution; it was at least one as to which the bulk of mankind are absolutely incapable of forming a rational judgment for themselves.’—*Const. Hist.*, iii. p. 443.

² See below, Lecture ii.

manner I am persuaded that the question of the right constitution of the Christian ministry is fully capable of solution, and of solution in a way far more plain and obvious to men of ordinary understanding. Originally, indeed, there was no difficulty about it at all. No learning, no investigation was required ; men had only to follow the plain teaching of God's Word, which bade them, on the one hand, not to separate themselves, and, on the other, to obey those who, in spiritual matters, had legitimately the rule over them (Heb. xiii. 17 ; see also 7-9). They would easily see that observance of these precepts was quite inconsistent with the notion of a variety of ministries in the same Christian community, or even in the Church at large ; unless it could be proved that the apostles themselves had authorised such variety in different localities—a supposition inconsistent with the fact that all, or nearly all the historical evidence which we possess goes to prove the direct contrary, showing, as it does most conclusively, that the primitive Churches, when fully organised, exhibited everywhere one and the same system.¹

How the question has become difficult.

There was, then, I say, under the Divine guidance, no difficulty at all about this question in the first instance. And

¹ Upon this point the following words of the historian, Gibbon, afford a testimony which is all-sufficient. Speaking of the Church in the second century, he writes : ‘*No Church without a bishop* was (then) *a fact as well as a maxim.*

As soon as we have passed the difficulties of the first century, we find Episcopacy *everywhere established*, until it was disturbed by the republican genius of the Swiss and German Reformers.’ See also below, p. 31 sq.

although afterwards, when usurpation and misgovernment had provoked a spirit of insubordination, and when a spirit of insubordination led men to divisions, and when all such divisions¹ were attended more or less with deviations from the original model ; although, I say, when the question had become thus perplexed, difficulties undoubtedly arose—difficulties which do now require learning and research to master them—yet I cannot believe they are insurmountable. I cannot bring myself to think that God would have required, as we see in Scripture that He does, united and harmonious action on the part of His Church—which united action we know by experience to be impossible without a substantial unity and uniformity in its constitution, more especially its clerical constitution—I cannot bring myself to think that He would have required this unless He had designed to mark out sufficiently what was to be the form of that constitution, and had also provided evidence which (though obscured more or less, in proportion to men's disobedience) should never cease to be accessible, to enable us to discover it. Moreover, we know the evils—the hindrances to the healthy and effectual working of the Church—which are caused by sectarianism, and especially ministerial sectarianism ; and is it to be supposed that we are for ever to be condemned to this state of things because the only sufficient remedy is

¹ I am speaking of those subsequent to the Reformation. In the earlier times the hold of the three-fold ministry was so strong upon

the consciences of Christians of all kinds, that it was retained even by those bodies who separated from the Church.

unattainable? It is true that ministerial division is often only the index and representative of a divergence in other respects; but it is also true that the greatest separation, the most melancholy and most extensive feud which has ever arisen among fellow Christians in this country, has arisen *mainly* out of disagreement in regard to this single point, the true constitution of the Church's ministry; and to this day the same single point forms the distinctive ground of that most unbrotherly discordance between the northern and southern portions of Great Britain, which, whether as Englishmen or Scotchmen, we have all most occasion to deplore. Once more: it can be shown that elements of identity underlie the principal diversities of system which actually exist, and that the diversities themselves can all be traced historically to one and the same common origin.

For these, among other reasons, I cannot but conclude that there ought to be discoverable what I may venture to call emphatically the right constitution of the Christian ministry, and that the fault must lie with ourselves if we fail to discover it, and to agree upon its acceptance.

Threefold
Division of
Subject.

So far I have explained the general scope and grounds of the enquiry, upon which I would invite you now to enter, and the principal object which it has in view. I have next to state, that I propose to divide the treatment of it into three main heads or lines of argument.

1. The argument *à priori*, or from what was rationally to have been expected beforehand under the circumstances of the case.

2. The *Scriptural* and *historical* argument, which will contain the formal and direct proof, and therefore will require to be treated most fully.

3. The argument *ex consequente*, or from the results which tend directly or indirectly to confirm the conclusions before arrived at.

Such is to be the course of our proposed investigation. I have already admitted that the enquiry cannot now be conducted so as to lead to any sound or trustworthy conclusion without study and research. For this reason I have announced that I address my appeal more especially to the learned professors and students of our universities. But I address it, in the next degree, to all those who are responsible in the sight of God for the right guidance of the mass of the humbler and less-instructed of their fellow Christians and fellow countrymen ; to the ministers of religion, to the members of the Legislature, to the better educated of the laity of all ranks, to the leaders of public opinion in all departments. At the same time, I shall endeavour to make all that I have to say perfectly intelligible, and I hope not altogether uninteresting to any miscellaneous audience who may favour me with their attention ; and while I shall avoid, as far as possible, all appearance of controversial disputation, I promise you that I shall omit to notice no argument of importance which has been alleged upon *either* side, and I shall produce no testimony or quotation of any kind which I have not myself drawn directly from its original source.

Persons
more par-
ticularly
addressed.

I now begin with the first main argument—the argument *à priori*, or from rational anticipation.

The Church
a visible
organisa-
tion.

i. When we see the Church spoken of in Holy Scripture as a body, as a kingdom, as a house and household, as a sheep-fold, as a tree or plant, we seem in these comparisons to be referred at once to the idea of a constitutional unity. And this idea is strengthened when we further read, still in connection with the same comparisons, that there must be no schism, no disjointure, in the body ; no rebellion, no insubordination, in the kingdom ; no division, no dissension in the house ; no alienation, no wandering from the fold ; no splitting, no dissevering of the branches from the parent tree. Nor will it suffice to understand these requirements, as though they could be satisfied with fulfilment only in a spiritual sense. Doubtless their fulfilment in that sense is essential.¹ Doubtless, whatever else the Church may be, it is above all things (to take the foremost of these typical comparisons) a body spiritual, a body mystical. But, as militant in this world, it is, and must be also a body visible ; a body having form and constitution ; no less than an army is visible, and has a form and constitution as such, over and above the immortal souls of the men of whom it is composed. We cannot, therefore, escape from the conclusion, that there

¹ See the admirable remarks of the Bishop of Salisbury in his 'Bampton Lectures,' pp. 198–200. And Professor Lightfoot has well pointed out (p. 237) how the extravagance of hierarchical pretensions,

as exhibited, for instance, in parts of the Ignatian Epistles, and in the Clementine Homilies, naturally led to the spiritual reaction of Montanism.

is a constitution, a right constitution, of the Church and of its ministry, which is to be sought for and maintained, if we would pay due attention to the laws which Christ Himself has prescribed, and the means which He has provided for the life, the welfare, and the extension of the Body of which He is the Head. He alone, I need scarcely say, is the sole original source, as of all power in the world, so of all government and administration in His Church ; and without authority from Him, as the Head, as the High Priest of our profession, as the one only supreme Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, nothing is, or can be, lawfully done, that is done, in *any* constitution of the Christian ministry.

2. Again : the analogy of what we may observe in the external world would lead us to the same conclusion. It is true that the utmost variety abounds everywhere in Nature ; but only such variety as is regulated by strict regard to the principle of *order*, and to the due fulfilment of the functions which each portion of creation is expected to discharge. We are expressly told in the New Testament that God is ‘a God not of confusion,¹ but of peace’ and order in His Church, no less than in His world ; and we know from experience, that the prescribed functions of the Church are not only imperfectly performed, but grievously impaired and hindered in consequence of the diversity of ecclesiastical organisations which now exists. In a word, ‘Order is God’s first law :

Analogy
from order
of Nature.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 33. ‘Confusion’ ; ‘want of a settled constitution.’
in the original ἀκαταστασίας, literally

is it, then, to exist everywhere save in the ministry of the Christian Church ?

Correspondence between the Jewish and Christian Ministry.

3. Again : the evident relation which we discern between the Law and the Gospel, the Jewish and the Christian Church ; a relation which exhibits the latter as the continuation and completion of the former;¹ a relation which is exemplified in the correspondence between the two great Jewish ordinances of Circumcision and the Passover, and the two great Christian sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's Day ; between the public and private worship enjoined upon the Jew, and the public and private worship² enjoined upon the Christian ; between the Jewish covenant of infant circumcision and the Christian covenant of infant baptism ; between the form and substance of the inspired teaching of the Jewish Scriptures, and the form and substance of the inspired teaching of the Christian Scriptures ; between the foundation of the Jewish Church upon the twelve patriarchs, and the foundation of the Christian Church upon the twelve apostles ; Christ Himself being in both revealed to faith as the Head Corner Stone.³ This correspondence,

¹ See Bishop of Lincoln on Jeremiah xxxiii. 18-22.

² The ritual of the Tabernacle and Temple is consummated and spiritualised in the Christian Church. See Bishop of Lincoln on Isaiah ix. 7. See also the prophecy of Amos ix. 11, 12, as quoted by St. James in

the Council at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 15-17.

³ It might have been added between the observance of the Jewish festivals, such as the Feast of Tabernacles, Passover, and Pentecost, and the observance of the Christian festivals, such as Christmas, Easter,

I say, when traced in its details, would naturally lead us to look for some tokens of a similar correspondence between the constitution of the Jewish and the constitution of the Christian Church ; in other words, would lead us to look not only for a definite organisation, but for an organisation of a peculiar form.¹ And the reasonableness of this expectation is confirmed when we consider that it is one duty of the Christian Church and ministry, as it was of the Jewish, to act as guardian of Holy Scripture—and not only of the same, but a greatly enlarged volume of the Scriptures ; and to teach not only the same, but a much more extensive and more mysterious system of revealed truth. Now in the Jewish Church we find not only a body of men solemnly called and set apart for the ministerial office, but a gradation of orders in that body ; consequently in the Christian Church we look for the same in both respects : we expect to find a graduated ministry—a ministry of three orders, corresponding (so far as the different circumstances² admit) with the three-fold ministry of the high priest, priests, and Levites among the Jews. Such a correspondence, moreover, appears to have been predicted by the prophets of the Old Testament,³

and Whitsuntide. See Zechariah xiv. 16–19 ; John vii. 2 ; Acts xviii. 21 ; xx. 16.

¹ See below, Lecture ii.

² That the correspondence does not extend to the sacerdotal character of the Jewish ministry is shown by Professor Lightfoot (pp. 184,

243–262) ; though, perhaps, he has stated the negative somewhat too broadly.

³ See Isaiah lxvi. 21 ; Jeremiah xxxiii. 20–22 ; Mal. iii. 3, 4. The word ‘priest’ in the singular is constantly used in the Old Testament to designate the ‘high priest,’ and in

and, as we shall see hereafter, was plainly recognised by the ancient Fathers.¹

Objections
answered.

Nor has this argument, so far as I can judge, been really invalidated by any of the objections which have been brought against it.² If it be alleged that because Christ is the only true Head of the Christian ministry, therefore there is no room in it for a superior order, like that of bishops, we reply that to the faithful Jew He was also the only true head of the Jewish ministry; and that as the high priests were His types and ministers in the latter, so the apostles and their prelatical successors are His *representatives* and ministers in the former. If it be objected that because there was only one high priest, therefore the supposed correspondence gives an advantage to Popery, we reply that the remark is founded on a misconception. The Jewish ministry was not, and was not intended to be, Catholic, as the Christian is; and the resemblance is to be looked for in an extensive diocese under a single bishop; with its cathedral, like the temple, for the centre of its worship, rather than in the entire body of the Christian Church.³ Once more. It

the plural, so as to include him. The 'sons of Levi' would comprehend the three orders. See below, Lecture ii. In 2 Kings xxiii. 4, we read of 'Hilkiah the *high priest*, and the priests of the *second order*'.

¹ See below, Lecture ii.

² Stillingfleet's 'Irenicum' admits that 'the Jewish pattern' is

sufficient to *justify* 'superiority and subordination of one order to another in the Christian ministry,' p. 174, sq.

³ See Dr. Crawford's 'Presbyterianism Defended,' p. 8, sq., compared with the author's Synodal Address for 1864, p. 21, sq.; Sadler's 'Church Doctrine—Bible Truth,' p. 199, sq.; and the Bishop of Lincoln on Jeremiah xxxiii. 18–22.

has been attempted to break the force of the argument derived from the analogy between the three-fold ministry of the Law, and the three-fold ministry of the Gospel, by looking for the type of the latter in the organisation of the Jewish synagogues.¹ But to this we reply that the institution of the Synagogues, though recognised by our Lord and His apostles, was not, so far as appears in Scripture, a divine ordinance; and certainly it has no claim like that of the priesthood, to be put upon a footing of comparison with the ministry ordained by Christ Himself.

There is, then, we maintain, in this comparison a strong *à priori* ground in favour of a graduated or three-fold ministry in the Christian Church. And this being so, I cannot refrain from pointing out further in relation to the Jewish priesthood, how carefully the succession of high priests, priests, and Levites, was continued, notwithstanding all the confusion of political revolutions. On the return from the Babylonish captivity no one was allowed to execute any sacred office who could not prove his Levitical descent. And this rule, we are told on the authority of Josephus, was never relaxed.² In like manner the prophetic passages of the Old Testament before referred to would lead us to conclude that a similar continuity was intended to be maintained in the Christian ministry, amid all the revolutions to which the Church might be subjected in

Succession
of Jewish
Ministry
carefully
preserved.

¹ See Stillingfleet's 'Irenicum,' Chron. vi., preliminary note. Also pp. 239, 253, 265, 268, 285. *Ibid.* note on ix. 20.

² See Bishop of Lincoln on 1

different countries from time to time. For example, we read in Jeremiah : ‘Thus saith the Lord, David (i.e. Christ) shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the House of Israel ; Neither shall the priests, the Levites,¹ want a man before me to offer burnt offerings . . . and to do sacrifice continually.’ And He goes on to compare this His divine covenant with David and with Levi to His natural covenant with the day and with the night, protesting that as the latter is indissoluble, so also is the former (Jerem. xxxiii. 17-22).

I have no wish to press the passage of St. Jude’s Epistle, ver. 11, further than it will justly bear, but it certainly seems to imply that ‘gainsaying’ or opposition, like that of Core, which was directed not only against Moses, the civil governor, but against Aaron, the high priest, had been already committed in the Christian Church, by those who withheld the prelatical authority even of the apostles, as Diotrephes, we know, withheld St. John.²

Analogy
from the
object of
Christian
worship.

4. Again : the frequent occurrence of mystical analogies in Holy Scripture tends to confirm us in the same argument, leading us, as it does, to expect that the worship of God, as revealed in the Three Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, would be consigned to a ministry, of which the form and constitution, being itself threefold, might serve to remind us

‘In the history of Barnabas, a *Levite*, bringing the price of his land, and laying it at the feet of the apostles, we see an image of the subordination of the Levitical priesthood to the Christian, and of the

absorption of the former into the latter.’ — Bishop of Lincoln on Isaiah lxi. 6.

² See Hammond’s ‘Dissert.’ I., c. xii. p. 39, sq.; c. xiii. pp. 43-47.

of the Triune Being whom the Scriptures have taught us to confess and to adore. Yes, I venture to think it is something more than an idle fancy when we recognise the fitness of this divine economy ; when we seem to discover the unspeakable mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost shadowed forth and typified in *a father of the flock* sending forth chosen and ordained ministers of salvation to all his people ; in an *everlasting priesthood* sent by him to preach and to offer reconciliation through the One atoning sacrifice ; and in the multiplied succession of *the seven ‘men of honest report,’* full of the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost, who complete the ministry and dispense its grace, not only the alms and offerings cast into the treasury, but the comfort and the guidance of the Spirit of truth and love.

5. Again : as all human society is imperfect without some form of civil government, and as the best form of government has been proved by experience to be that of a constitutional monarchy, balanced by inferior degrees of rank and power, so in the Church it is reasonable to look for a corresponding form, and, I may add, for *no other* ; because, however deflections from the highest standard—deflections involving much variety—may be admissible in civil polity, it was to be expected that only the best organisation would be admissible in ecclesiastical polity ; this, I say, was to be expected as a consequence of God’s greater care for His Church, designed, as it is, to promote, not transitory and temporal, but permanent and eternal interests. Nor is this all. God has expressly revealed His will that the Church

Analogy
from Civil
Government
—how far
admissible.

should be constituted as a Catholic or universal whole; in other words, as ‘one body,’ a body so united as not to be divisible without sin, and subject to the same code of laws (i.e. the Holy Scripture) and the same fundamental ordinances.¹ But He has not revealed this in either respect as regards the states and nations of this world; rather He has indicated the contrary, both by His Word and by His providence. Consequently, we find, that whereas a diversity of government among nations does not prevent them from maintaining all those friendly relations which their circumstances may require for their mutual good, it is not so in the case of ecclesiastical communities. On the contrary, experience teaches us that religious intercourse and co-operation do not, and cannot, take place between them for their

¹ It is the neglect of this consideration which misled young Edward Stillingfleet when he wrote in his ‘Irenicum,’ p. 153: ‘There can be no necessity (for uniformity of Church government) but either by way of *means to an end*, or by way of *divine command*. I know *none will say* that any particular form of government is necessary absolutely by way of means to an end; for certainly, supposing no obligation from Scripture, government by an equality of power in the officers of the Church, or by superiority of one order above another, are indifferent in order to the general ends of government, and not one more necessary than

another.’ This may, perhaps, be truly said with regard to political government, but certainly it is not true of ecclesiastical—for the reasons mentioned in the text; and so far from ‘no one’ saying that a general uniformity of Church ministry is ‘necessary as a means to an end,’ I am persuaded that *everyone* will say so who has sufficiently considered that union and communion (an end certainly prescribed in Scripture) between different Churches is unattainable without an essential agreement upon, and acceptance of, the same ministry as well as the same Scriptures and the same sacraments.

common benefit—no, not even when the individuals of whom they are composed are neighbours, friends, or relations, and their interests, as such, *compel them to associate*—unless their form of Church government (together with their form of Christian doctrine) be substantially the same.¹

It has been a favourite argument with those who deny the obligation of uniformity in the Christian ministry to point to the dissimilarity of political governments, and to infer that there is no more ground for uniformity in the one case than in the other.² But it will be evident from the remarks now made that this analogy, however plausible, is not a just one. Its fallacy would, I believe, have been more apparent if the question of the ministry or clerical executive of the Church had been kept more distinct from the question of its polity or government, which, though inclusive of the ministry, is not identical, and ought not to be confounded with it. Whatever we may think of ecclesiastical polity as a whole, it is certain that the ministry of the Church is an ordinance of Christ Himself in a way far more definite than can be pleaded in behalf of any civil executive.

6. Once more : the interests that are at stake, and depend in no small degree upon the due discharge of the functions, especially the higher functions, of the Christian ministry, are of such a kind, so inestimably precious, so unspeakably mo-

The great ends of the Ministry would lead us to expect graduation.

¹ See the author's Synodal Address for 1864, p. 72 sqq.

the opinions of Bochart, Grotius, Lord Bacon, and others, to that effect.

² Stillingfleet's 'Irenicum,' pp. 192 sq. 402 sq., where he quotes

mentous, that we should naturally expect to find, not only a body of men set apart for their performance—which confessedly we do find—but an order of rank in that body, with stages of promotion fixed and regulated, so that intervals of time and service must elapse, sufficient at once to afford experience to each individual and to test his character, before he can be commonly admitted to its most important duties. This precaution of graduated advancement is observed in other callings and professions, such as those of the law, of the army and navy, of the civil service ; and how much more reasonably may it be looked for and required in the organisation of the Christian ministry, with its far more weighty and more solemn responsibilities. Moreover, the same principle is confirmed very strongly by the fact that the apostles themselves were not fully consecrated and installed in the great office which they were to exercise after Christ's departure until they had received, at suitable intervals of time, a thrice-repeated call and mission from their divine Master.¹

Such, then, in brief, is an outline of the argument, as it presents itself to us in its *à priori* form, the form in which (as it seems to me) the question we have to consider may be best approached.

Argument
from Holy
Scripture.

I now proceed, in the second place, to the Scriptural and historical argument ; in other words, we have now to ascertain whether the facts of the case, as found in Scripture and

¹ See Luke vi. 13, ix. 1 ; John xx. 21.

in the history of the Church, do actually exhibit such results as our preceding line of argument has led us to expect.

First, then, I observe that the facts recorded in the Gospels respecting our Lord's appointment of the twelve apostles, and the distinct position and operation which He assigned to them, would seem to afford conclusive proof that, in the system of the Gospel, *ministerial agency* and *authority* was from the first, and was to continue to be, a leading principle. Moreover, I remark, that the authoritative action of each apostle did not depend upon his acting in concurrence with, or in dependence upon, his apostolic brethren, (except in cases of more than ordinary importance, such as occurred in the Council of Jerusalem,) but was personal and individual ; in other words, was complete and independent in itself. And further, the fact that the apostles were not chosen by the Church, but by Christ, before the Church was in existence, may be regarded as a sufficient indication that the Church itself, through its members, is not the source of ecclesiastical power and ministration, but that these are derived to it from its divine Head, through the apostles whom He ordained.¹ And the subsequent mission of St. Paul, to be the apostle of the Gentiles, by a direct call from Christ in Heaven, and his fuller and more formal ordination, with Barnabas, eleven years afterwards, by express command of the Holy Ghost, are additional evidences to the same effect. Nor can I omit to add, that the distinction and pre-eminence which were given by our Lord Himself in His own

Preliminary assumptions.

¹ See Wheatly 'On Common Prayer,' ch. ii. lect. iii. sect. 1, p. 84 sqq.

ministry to ‘the twelve’ above ‘the seventy,’ must be allowed to afford a presumption that in the ministry of the Church the system to be observed would be one not of equality but of subordination.

These propositions being assumed, let us investigate carefully what was the particular form of ministry which the twelve apostles, with Paul and Barnabas, who had been put, as I have said, into the same peculiar and distinct position, did, by the aid and guidance of the Holy Spirit, actually institute.

For this purpose, let us begin by taking up our stand at the close of the first century ; that is, upon the confines of the apostolic and post-apostolic age, which will also be the confines of inspired and uninspired testimony.

Starting-point of enquiry—end of first century.

Why chosen.

I choose this particular position, in the first instance, because it affords a starting-point which is neither too early nor too late in the course of our investigation. On the one hand, in occupying it, we may feel assured that we are not so far from the first beginnings of the Church but that we are still upon safe and certain ground. On the other hand, it was not to have been expected that the ministry of the Church would be able to assume what was eventually to be its full and perfect organisation during the earlier stages of its existence. This, I say, was not to have been expected, on several accounts. First, the men to be admitted into the ministry would require, for the most part, to go through a course of preparatory training, more or less prolonged ; especially such as were of heathen parentage, and had lived

only in heathen lands.¹ Many years after the Church had been founded by St. Paul at Ephesus, he felt it necessary to admonish Timothy not to ordain ‘a novice.’ (1 Tim. iii. 6.)² Next, the inhuman treatment with which the first disciples were constantly assailed, and the command which they had received, that when persecuted in one city they should flee into another, may remind us that the settled establishment of diocesan episcopacy was a thing not easily to be accomplished, nor speedily to be looked for under such circumstances. And if at Rome, towards the close of his life, St. Paul himself had occasion to complain that Demas, formerly his fellow-labourer, had ‘forsaken’ him, through ‘love of this present world ;’ and—still worse—that at his first being brought to trial ‘all men forsook him ;’ he would see cause enough to be slow and cautious in appointing any to prelatical power. Again : before the Christian ministry could be fully instituted and openly displayed, it was necessary, in

¹ Epiphanius has justly remarked that ‘the apostles were not able to establish all things immediately at first. . . . In the infancy of the Church it was necessary to adapt the arrangements of the ministry, in some degree, to the fitness of the men who offered themselves, and to the circumstances of each particular case.’ And he adds: ‘No system in the world was ever completed and brought to perfection except by degrees.’—Vol. i. p. 908. Comp. ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 180, 328 sq.; Bilson,

ch. xii. p. 287; Smalridge, serm. i. p. 192; Beveridge, ‘Cod. Canon,’ lib. ii. c. xi. p. 313.

² Comp. the second canon of the first General Council (of Nicæa, A.D. 325), where this text is quoted, with a strict injunction that it should be still observed in regard to every candidate for the ministry: ‘Nam et tempore opus est ut sit catechumenus, et post baptismum multâ probatione indiget.’ See Labb. Concil., ii. pp. 45, 238.

the order of God's providence, that the Jewish ministry, as having been also of divine institution, should disappear.¹ But that disappearance, we know, was not immediate upon the commencement of the Christian Church. On the contrary, it did not take place till after the deaths of the far greater number of the apostles, including St. Peter and St. Paul. This interval extended over nearly forty years, during all which time it was manifestly the will of God that the Jewish priesthood, though doomed, and 'ready to vanish away,' should be treated by Christians with all due respect.² It is upon this ground, probably, that we nowhere read in the Acts of any formal institution of either a bishop or of presbyters at Jerusalem; just as we nowhere read of any formal abolition of the Jewish Sabbath, or formal institution of the Christian Lord's Day. And the truth is, that for some time both of those days, our Saturday and Sunday, were almost equally observed by the primitive Christians. Lastly, for the causes and under the circumstances now explained, it seemed good to the divine Head of the Christian Church, during the first period of its existence, to make large use, especially in heathen lands, of miraculous gifts and offices,

¹ Comp. the author's Synodal Addresses for 1864, pp. 26, 38, and for 1866, p. 25.

² See Acts xxiii. 5. (The date of that incident is A.D. 60.) Stillingfleet's 'Iren.', p. 255. Bishop of Lincoln on 1 Chron. xiv. 'During that interval of near forty years

the apostles and other faithful Christians communicated in the services of the Temple as well as in those of the Church.' Also on Acts xi. 46, and 2 Chron. v. 5. The bishops of Jerusalem were all 'of the circumcision' down to A.D. 136. See Euseb. H. E., iv. 5.

which for a time occupied the place, and performed the part of ordinary ministration, to a considerable extent, and, as may be supposed, with far greater effect.

For these reasons, we shall, as I have said, commence our investigation from the time at which St. John, the last of the apostles, closed his ministry ; and, advancing upwards from that point, proceed to take a retrospective survey of the scriptural and apostolic age.

First, then, St. John himself, shortly before his death,¹ which occurred at Ephesus, about A.D. 100, composed the book of Revelation (A.D. 95) while he was an exile in the island of Patmos. In that book he is directed by Christ Himself to write seven letters to the Seven Churches of the Lesser, or rather Lydian, Asia. And to whom, in each case, by Christ's own order, does he address them? To a presbytery? To a synod? To a general assembly? No—but to an individual whom He calls the ‘Angelus’ of each Church. And who is this individual? Might not he be the temporary president or ‘moderator’ of a presbytery or synod or general assembly? In order to answer this question, let us first consider the name of the individual, and then the duties which he is required to perform. We know what the

Testimony
of St. John.

Angels of
the Seven
Churches.

¹ Milman, agreeing with Lücke, boldly asserts that ‘the Revelation of St. John belongs to an earlier period of his life, before the destruction of Jerusalem.’—*Hist. of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 388. If there were sufficient authority for this

assertion, the argument above would not be weakened, but rather confirmed. Professor Lightfoot also seems inclined to adopt the later date of the Apocalypse, ‘with,’ as he says, ‘most recent writers,’ p. 198.

name ‘moderator’ means. It means one who sits as chairman, and moderates in the business of a meeting for the time being, with no permanent office, no superiority but that which it is necessary for him to use as president, and who, in all other respects, is simply an equal among equals.

Meaning of
the name
'Angel.'

The name ‘Angelus’ means one who is *sent* with a message. It is applied to John the Baptist as the ‘messenger’ of Christ (Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 27). It is so similar in meaning to the name Apostolus—which signifies one who is *sent out*—that this latter word is also translated ‘messenger’ in two places of St. Paul’s Epistles, viz. 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25. From this, and from its ordinary use, to indicate an ‘angel’ of God,¹ we might reasonably infer that Christ, in these letters, intends it as a title of eminence in the person to whom it is applied, as it certainly was when applied to John the Baptist; and that He chose it designedly, rather than the name ‘apostle’ both on other accounts, and because these angeli of the seven churches were not ‘sent out,’ but stationary ‘messengers,’ and yet with so much of the missionary character, in the infancy of the Church, that the name would still be more appropriate as an official de-

¹ That, as used by St. John in the epistles to the Seven Churches, it cannot mean heavenly or holy angels, see Archbishop Trench on those epistles, p. 53 sq. On the other hand, however, Professor Lightfoot is not satisfied with the interpretation given above, and pre-

fers to understand either ‘an actual person—the celestian guardian of the Church—or only a personification—the idea or spirit of the Church,’ p. 198. He does not appear to have considered the sense of the Greek name, otherwise than in its English signification.

signation¹ than that of *episcopus*, or settled *overseer*, which soon after prevailed, to denote diocesan superintendence. But to pass from the name to that which is more important, and more conclusive—the office itself. I think it would greatly surprise anyone who happened to be, at the time, either the in-coming or out-going moderator of a presbyterian presbytery, or synod, or general assembly, to find himself not only regarded as the representative² of his Church, but made so entirely responsible for its good government, as is implied in these letters of Christ addressed severally to the angels of the Seven Churches. Read the letters, and see what they contain. They contain no rebuke to the prelates of those Churches for arrogating to themselves a pre-eminence which was contrary to the design of Christ. No—but they condemn them, so far as they are condemned, for not exercising with sufficient zeal and fidelity the authority which, as holding that pre-eminence, they were bound to use. It is true, the names of the several individuals are not recorded,³ and with good reason, because, as the Seven Churches themselves were typical and exemplary, so these addresses (we

¹ Archbishop Trench justly remarks: 'I am far from affirming that bishops were commonly called "angels" in the primitive Church; or called so at all, except with a more or less conscious reference to this use of the word in the Apocalypse. . . . The term belongs to the enigmatic, symbolic character of the book, elevated in its language

throughout above the level of daily life.'—Page 56.

² Stillingfleet, 'Irenicum,' p. 298, suggests that 'in the prophetical style an unity may be set down by way of representation of a multitude.'

³ See Dr. Crawford's 'Presbyterianism Defended,' p. 20.

may be sure) were designed to be universally applicable, for warning and instruction, in all ages of the Church.¹

Ministry of
the Seven
Churches
prelatical.

For warning and instruction both in other respects, and not least in regard to the right constitution of the Christian ministry. For it is, I think, impossible² to put any satisfactory interpretation upon these ‘angeli,’ except by understanding them to mean individual officers, holding singly the highest and most responsible position in their respective Churches—a position which excludes the notion of a parity of many such in the same ministry within the same Church. I say of ‘many such,’ because at Ephesus, for example, one of those Seven Churches, which had its ‘angel,’ we know, from the Acts of the Apostles (ch. xx.), there had been a body of presbyters nearly forty years before;³ and we also know

¹ On the political importance of the cities of the Seven Churches, see Usher, vol. vii. p. 61.

² This Mosheim admits in the plainest terms, ‘De Rebus Christ.,’ p. 133; and he goes on to add that, even if this proof of the antiquity of bishops could be ‘overthrown’—which he declares it ‘never’ can be—‘ipsa tamen rerum veterum Christianarum consideratio nos eō facile ducet ut ipso civitatis Christianæ exordio haud multum juiores Episcopos esse statuamus.’ Archbishop Trench declares: ‘I again repeat my conviction that in these angeli we are to recognise the bishops of the several Churches. So

many difficulties, embarrassments, improbabilities, attend every other solution, all disappearing with the adoption of this, while no other rise in their room, that, were not other interests, often, no doubt unconsciously, at work, this assuredly is the conclusion to which all interpreters must have come.’—Page 58. I have already stated, however, that Professor Lightfoot is not of this opinion.

³ In A.D. 58, ‘the Church of Ephesus, which in the Acts is represented by its elders (presbyters), in the Revelation is represented by its angel or bishop.’—Milman, ‘Hist. Christ.,’ ii. p. 16. Archbishop

that thirty years before, Timothy had been placed there by St. Paul in a prelatical position, with authority and instruction to ordain more presbyters, and also to ordain deacons in a lower grade (1 Tim. iii. 13). So that here, in these chapters of the Apocalypse, we see before the departure of the last apostle, the diocesan and prelatical system fully developed, not only with its ‘angel,’ having presbyters and deacons under him, but with St. John himself as its archbishop or metropolitan. Moreover, all this we see not only upon Scriptural and apostolic authority, but upon the direct sanction and direction of Christ Himself.¹

Uninspired testimony, contemporaneous, or nearly so, to the same effect, also exists, and can readily be produced. Such are the facts universally recognised in ecclesiastical history, that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, a city not far from Laodicea, were both disciples of St. John. Such is the express statement made by Clement of Alexandria,² in a narrative which he represents as carefully preserved and handed down to his own time in the third century, that St. John, when (after leaving Patmos) he had come to reside at Ephesus, was in the habit

Uninspired
testimony to
the same
effect.

Clement of
Alexandria.

Trench remarks: ‘numerous as by this time the presbyters must have been, there is only one angel in each of these Churches. What can he be but a bishop? a bishop too *with the prerogatives which we ascribe to one*. His pre-eminence cannot be explained away.’—Page 55.

¹ See Archbishop Usher on Original of Bishops and Metropolitans. Works, vol. vii. pp. 45 sq., 56, 59, 69.

² ‘Quis Dives,’ &c., c. xli., vol. ii. p. 959. Also in Euseb. H. E., lib. iii. c. xxiii. p. 82.

of going forth, upon invitation, to the neighbouring countries of the Gentiles : in some to appoint bishops ; in others to constitute or set in order whole Churches ; and in others again to ordain into the number of the clergy (which seems to imply priests and deacons¹), this or that individual from among those who were pointed out by the Holy Ghost.

Tertullian.

Again : Tertullian, the contemporary of St. Clement, writing about one hundred years after the apostle's death, speaks of the foster Churches of St. John, and with allusion especially to those of the Apocalypse, says that the order of their bishops (and in the time of Tertullian we know that the title of bishop meant a prelatical bishop and nothing else) is to be traced to him.² Once more : it is interesting to add that in the Epistles of Ignatius, written only seven years after St. John's death, we find the name of Onesimus as bishop of Ephesus (c. i.), the name of Damas as bishop of Magnesia (c. ii.), the name of Polybius as bishop of Tralles (c. i.) ; both places not far from Ephesus ; and then descending to the time of the first General Council—the Council of Nicæa—in A.D. 325, we find among the names of the 318 prelates who signed the acts of that Council, not only Menophanes, bishop of Ephesus (in succession from Onesimus and from Timothy), but Eutychius, bishop of Smyrna (in succession

¹ See Sclater's 'Original Draught,' p. 235 sq. ; Usher, vol. vii. p. 58.

² *Contr. Marcion.*, lib. iv. c. v. ; vol. ii. p. 366. The words are, 'in Joannem stabit auctorem ;' which, in regard to Ephesus at least, must

be understood with some qualification. St. Jerome mentions that St. John wrote his Gospel 'at the request of the bishops of Asia.'—*De Vir. Illust.*, vol. ii. p. 263.

from Polycarp), Artemidorus, bishop of Sardis (in succession from Melito, mentioned by Eusebius, and by Jerome, as occupying that see in the second century¹⁾) ; Soron, bishop of Thyatira, Ethymasius, bishop of Philadelphia, Nunechius, bishop of Laodicea ; so that, on that list, we find episcopal successors of six of the angels assigned to the Seven Churches in the book of Revelation ; and in the list of the bishops who subscribed at the fourth General Council—the Council of Chalcedon—we find a successor of the seventh, viz. Eutropius, the bishop of Pergamos.²

Such is the evidence, inspired and uninspired, upon the question before us, which we obtain, more or less directly, from the Scriptural teaching and apostolic authority of the Beloved Disciple. It is manifestly of such weight that it may be said to be conclusive, so far as it goes. Accordingly, the historian Gibbon (who, I need not say, had no bias in favour of the Christian hierarchy, prejudiced as he was against Christianity itself) has declared, mainly upon the strength of this evidence, that ‘the Episcopal form of Church government’ (which he describes as ‘an honourable and perpetual magistracy’) ‘appears to have been introduced before the end of the first century.’ And it is plain, he held that government to be Scriptural, because he refers to the introductory chapters of Revelation in proof that ‘bishops

Importance
of this
evidence
generally
acknow-
ledged.

¹ See Euseb. H. E., iv. 26, Jerome, ‘De Vir. Illustr.’ c. xxiv.

² See Labbe’s Concil., vol. ii. p. 52 sq.; and vol. iv. p. 605. Eu-

tropius was absent, but his metropolitan, Stephanus, bishop of Ephesus, subscribed for him.

under the name of angels were already instituted in the seven cities of Asia.¹ The force of the same evidence has been also felt and acknowledged by learned Presbyterians of the Continent ; such as Grotius,² Scultetus,³ Mosheim, the ecclesiastical historian,⁴ and more recently by Röthe, the author of a work on ‘The Beginnings of the Christian Church ;’ while among ourselves a distinguished Principal and theological professor not long since published a lecture, which contained a statement in these words :—

‘Episcopacy, as an order distinct from presbyters, has continued in the Church since the later age of St. John. This is simply matter of history, which no candid enquirer can deny.’

Unfortunately there are many who are not candid or impartial enquirers⁵ in this matter ; and many more, who

¹ Gibbon’s ‘Hist.,’ c. xv. See also above, p. 6. Hooker, ‘Ec. Pol.,’ book vii. c. v. 2.

² Grotius goes so far as to say that the Apocalypse affords an irrefragable argument that episcopacy was approved by divine right—‘divino jure approbatum,’ because it was Christ Himself who, by St. John, wrote to the seven ‘angels.’ ‘De Imperio circum sacra.’ Works, vol. iv. p. 272.

³ In Ep. ad Tit. In this instance I have not been able to verify the quotation. But his words, I believe, are : ‘Angelos septem doctissimi quique Interpretes interpre-

tantur septem Ecclesiarum Episcopos ; neque vero aliter possunt, nisi textui vim facere velint.’

⁴ See above, p. 28, and below, p. 76.

⁵ I am sorry to observe that Dr. Cunningham, whom I should be unwilling to think *uncandid*, in his Church History appears to place the distinction between bishops and presbyters a whole century later. He writes : ‘The *second* century had not expired before we discover traces of a distinction between them,’ vol. i. p. 65 ; and he adds, with still greater violation of historical truth : ‘Even in the third century every congregation had its

knowing little or nothing of ecclesiastical history, still are forward to pronounce an opinion at variance with the facts ; and consequently the strife is prolonged, simply as strife, to the injury of all our best and highest interests, moral, social, political, and religious.

But it may be argued—and German theologians, in particular, finding themselves in the predicament of having no episcopal ministry, are not slow to argue in self-defence—that the practice and authority of St. John alone (although we have shown that this testimony rests upon the express direction of Christ Himself) are not sufficient, so as to involve the obligation of the universal acceptance of the same ministry ; and, further, it may be, and is, alleged that we shall find it far more difficult, if not impossible, to prove a similar ministry from the practice and authority of the other apostles. And this we may suppose was felt and intended by the respected writer, to whom I just now referred, when he allowed his frank admission of the primitive existence of episcopacy to go no farther back into the first, that is, the Scriptural and apostolic century, than to the ‘ later age of

St. John's
testimony
confirmed by
that of other
apostles.

own bishop.’ Moreover, he has ventured to say in a note, that ‘this is substantially the account of the matter given, not only by Neander but by Mosheim, and by Gibbon.’ Now what Gibbon states, we have seen above, p. 6 and p. 31. And Mosheim represents that, ‘when the apostles were scattered abroad’—and therefore *still living*—an in-

dividual was chosen to be ‘set over’ (not ‘preside in’ as Maclaine translates) the College of Presbyters, ‘qui primūm *Angelus* (Apoc. ii., iii.), posteā *Episcopus* dicebatur ;’ and that this arrangement seems to have been introduced first at *Jerusalem* ; that is, under St. James.—Cent. i., part ii. ch. 2. See below, pp. 66 and 75.

St. John.' Let us then proceed, as I proposed, in our retrospective investigation, and leaving the standing-point which I first selected—the close of the first century—let us advance upwards from the date of St. John's death, A.D. 100, first to that of St. Peter and St. Paul, who were martyred at Rome A.D. 68 ; and afterwards to that of St. James, surnamed The Less, who was martyred at Jerusalem A.D. 62 ; and looking again at the facts around us—the Scriptural teaching and the apostolic practice—from those points of view, let us see again how this matter stands.¹

Testimony
of St. Peter.

Of St. Peter's history, after his miraculous escape from imprisonment at Jerusalem, A.D. 44 (*Acts* xiii. 17), we know very little ; but that little has, almost all of it, a most important bearing upon the original constitution of the Christian ministry. We know that he was again at Jerusalem, about six years later, being present at the Council of which we read in *Acts* xv., comp. *Gal.* ii. 9 ; and that when he was in Antioch shortly after, St. Paul 'withstood him to the face'

¹ It is the weakness of Röthe's theory, that he draws too hard and broad a line between the organising work of the apostles, St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. James on the one hand, and of St. John—with perhaps St. Philip and St. Andrew—on the other ; and that he makes the origin of episcopacy to rest upon a decree of a second apostolic Council, which he supposes to have been held for that purpose presently after the

deaths of the three former, and after the destruction of Jerusalem. See Lightfoot, pp. 200, 203 sq. ; who, however, though he avoids these errors of Röthe, appears, like him, to refer the development of episcopacy too exclusively to secondary causes—in his argument (see pp. 204, 232) ; though in his conclusion he claims for it 'a divine appointment, or at least a divine sanction,' p. 265.

(Gal. ii. 11–13)—a sufficient indication that he enjoyed no supremacy over the other apostles, that no appeal was allowed to his judgment as of greater weight than theirs, still less as infallible. From thenceforward to the time of his death we lose sight of him altogether in the history of the New Testament.¹ His first Epistle, in which he ‘exhorts’ (v. 1) the presbyters of the dispersed Jewish converts to whom it is addressed, purports to have been written from Babylon, and its probable date is A.D. 64; while the date of the second Epistle may be placed about three years later, or a year before his martyrdom. That besides the more general episcopate which he shared with the other apostles, he was also in a more restricted sense bishop of Antioch first, and afterwards of Rome, as having been closely connected with the foundation of both those Churches—or, at least, that he assisted and sanctioned with his apostolic authority the constitution of those bishoprics—no one, I think, will be inclined to doubt who has sufficiently examined the early and abundant testimony² to that effect which we still possess, and the

¹ See the Bishop of Lincoln on the General Epistles, p. 37. The passage 1 Cor. i. 12 by no means necessarily implies the personal presence of St. Peter at Corinth. See Milman’s ‘History of Christianity,’ i. p. 464, note.

² See Irenæus, iii. 3; Tertullian ‘de Præscript. Hæret.’ c. xxxii.; Origen in Luc. Hom. vi.; Cyprian Epist. lv. c. xiv. et alib.; Eusebius H. E.,

iii. 21, 35, iv. 1; and Chronicon, year A.D. 44; Epiphanius, Hær. xxvii. c. vi. Optatus, i. 10, ii. 2, 3, 10; Jerome ‘de Vir. Illustr.,’ c. i. and c. xvi.; in Epist. ad Gal. ii. 11; St. Chrysost., Hom. in S. Ignat. vol. ii. p. 712; Ruffinus, Præf. ad Recognit. Clement. Patr. Apostol. i. p. 492; Fulgentius de Trin. c. i. p. 498. See Lightfoot, p. 207 sq., respecting the testimony of the Cle-

general acceptance which has been given to it by ecclesiastical historians. But whether the facts, as commonly stated, be received or no, is comparatively unimportant in our present argument ; because it is quite indisputable—if anything in the history of the world be so—that a veritable episcopal succession commenced in both those cities some years before the close of the apostolic age, and (we must conclude) with the sanction and by the appointment of one or more of the apostles themselves. This succession has obtained for itself a place in books which are merely of a secular character, having no ecclesiastical bias, and which record it simply as matter of undoubted fact ; just as they record the succession of Roman consuls, or Roman emperors, or other matters of the same kind, with no more hesitation in regard to their credibility than is felt in accepting the demonstration of a mathematical problem. Such a book is the ‘Fasti Romani’ of the late Mr. Fynes Clinton ; a work of the highest authority as a chronological repertory ; a work which Professor Blackie has truly said no scholar should be without ;¹ a work not by an ecclesiastic, but by a layman, who was for many years a member of the House of Commons, and who, though a man of genuine faith and

Episcopal successions
at Rome,
Antioch, and
Alexandria
during the
first century.

mentine writings, and p. 218 respecting the early date of episcopacy at Rome. ‘Hegesippus, who visited Rome about the middle of the second century, has left it on record that he drew up a list of the Roman bishops to his own time.’—See Euseb. H. E.,

iv. 22.

¹ ‘Mr. Clinton’s solid and massive work on Greek [and Roman] Chronology is the vade mecum of every scholar.’—Professor Blackie, Introd. Lecture, 1862.

piety, certainly was not a high Churchman. Well, then, this thoroughly learned and trustworthy work represents to us first Linus (mentioned by St. Paul in the second Epistle to Timothy, iv. 21, written from Rome), next Anacletus, then Clement¹ (also not improbably the same who is mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. iv. 3), then Euarestus, as successively bishops of Rome; it represents, first, Euodius, and then Ignatius as successively bishops of Antioch; it represents first Annianus, then Abilius, then Cerdon as bishops of Alexandria (with which metropolis St. Peter was also connected, either personally or through St. Mark²); it represents, I say, all these as having been bishops respectively in Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria—at that time the three capital cities of Europe, Asia, and Africa—before the end of the *first* century, or, in other words, within the Scriptural and apostolic age. Are we inclined to dispute whether there were emperors of Rome during that time? Do we intend to maintain that Pagan Rome was at that time governed by a republican, and not a monarchical constitution? If so, then may we also dispute whether, during the same time, Rome

¹ ‘The reason for supposing Clement to have been a bishop is as strong as the universal tradition of the next ages can make it.’—Lightfoot, p. 219. See also below, Lect. ii.

² St. Jerome (after Euseb., ii. 16) speaks of St. Mark as having founded the Church of Alexandria, ‘De Vir. Illustr.,’ c. viii., and traces the succe-

sion of its bishops from him. Epist. ad Evang., i. p. 1194. Upon what he further says, in this latter passage, respecting the appointment of the earlier bishops of that Church, see below, Lect. ii., also Lect. iii. On the early Alexandrian succession which is recorded only by Eusebius, see Appendix to Lecture ii., and Lightfoot, p. 223.

had bishops ; then may we also maintain that Christian Rome was, at the same time, administered under a presbyterian and not a prelatical constitution. But if we will venture upon no such vain attempt,¹ if we accept the former facts as historic truth, as well ascertained and unquestionable realities, then I know not how we can answer it to God and our own consciences, if (through a spirit of obstinate prejudice or unchristian strife) we refuse to accept the latter facts as no less true and certain and unquestionable ; seeing they are brought before us in the same way, and rest upon similar testimony of ancient authors, such as no scholar can reject.

Objections
taken to
those suc-
cessions
groundless.

It has, indeed, been argued² that in those catalogues to which I have referred, there may have been a personal succession, such as that of the Archons Eponymi at Athens,

¹ The reader who wishes to see young Edward Stillingfleet's attempt to that effect (made when he was scarcely 24 years of age) may find it in 'Irenicum,' pp. 296 sq., 321 sq. He even doubts whether St. Ignatius was 'brought to Rome to suffer,' and avows that the story of his martyrdom 'doth not seem to be any of the most probable.' He observes that 'in none of the Churches most spoken of is the succession so clear as is necessary,' p. 301. But we appeal from the unripened sentiments of this able but youthful and self-confident controversialist, with a *thesis* to maintain, to the

more sober judgment and profounder learning of the mature scholar and divine. See the same E. Stillingfleet's Preface to his Ordination Sermon, preached and published 25 years afterwards (before he was made bishop), viz. in 1685. Works, vol. i. p. 358. Also 'Unreasonableness of Separation,' Pref., p. lxxi. sq., lxxvi. ; and his first charge as bishop in 'Eccl. Cases,' i. pp. 5-9.

² See Blondel's 'Apologia,' Praef. p. 7. Stillingfleet's 'Irenicum,' p. 300. On the other side, see S. Parker's 'Church Government,' p. 69.

and yet no succession of prelatical power. But if so, it must be asked, at what time and under what circumstances did the transition from the former to the latter take place? For that the succession was a prelatical one when Eusebius, and even when Irenæus wrote, will not be questioned. And why—except for some unworthy purpose of gaining a controversial advantage—why are we to be so uncharitable as to suppose that these and other ancient writers were guilty of fraud?—for such it was if they have represented an episcopal succession as continuous throughout in substantially one and the same character, which in fact was continued in two characters, widely different from each other; guilty, I say, of fraud, of which we find no hint whatever in any historical record, and which they could have had little or no temptation to practise at a time when no controversy existed, or had as yet been ever known to exist, respecting the constitution of the Christian ministry?

So much, then, for St. Peter's history from this point of view. I next proceed to the history of St. Paul, in which, while the testimony of ancient authors will remain equally clear, the teaching of Holy Scripture will become far more manifest to the same effect, in proportion as the inspired memorials which we have received of that apostle are more abundant. It is, indeed, a noticeable fact—and indicates, I suppose, the pre-eminence which was at hand for the Gentile Church—that while his own epistles form by far the largest portion of the sacred writings which relate to the foundation and first upgrowth of the Church, the only Scriptural narra-

Testimony
of St. Paul

tive which records the acts of the apostles during the same period, so far as it embraces their missionary undertakings, is devoted almost exclusively to the labours of St. Paul. Whatever, therefore, is the result to which we may be led by this part of our investigation, it is only reasonable to conclude that we should have reached the same if the New Testament had favoured us with equally full details respecting the operations of the other apostles.

For a considerable time, and during all the earlier stage of his apostleship, it is evident that St. Paul retained in his own hands the supreme authority over all the Churches which he had founded ; and we may, I think, not unfairly suppose that other apostles did the same.¹ In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, A.D. 57, twelve years after his consecration—he writes, ‘so ordain I in all the Churches’ (vii. 17). Again : in his second Epistle, he speaks of ‘the care of all the Churches coming upon him daily’ (xi. 28). We must, therefore, look beyond the date of the epistles which he wrote during that earlier period, if we desire to ascertain what provision he proposed to make for the ministerial government of the said Churches when the prelatical oversight which he had hitherto exercised in his own person must necessarily expire. Accordingly, with this design, we take up one of the latest of his epistles, the first to Timothy, written A.D. 65, only three years before his martyrdom. In that epistle, the first passage to which I desire to draw your attention, is the following in chap. iii. ver. 13 :—

¹ See Professor Lightfoot, p. 196 sq.

‘They that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree ($\beta\alpha\theta\mu\acute{o}\nu$) and great boldness (of speech) in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.’

Foundation
of the minis-
try in the
diaconate.

That is, they are entitled, St. Paul writes to Timothy, to be promoted by you in the ministry, for the discharge of duties similar, but higher and more advanced, than those in which they have been before engaged. In this text, then, which even St. Jerome has interpreted¹ as relating to a third order of the clergy, we see not only the actual foundation, but the true *rationale*² of the Christian ministry. First the candidates for the said office are to be ‘proved,’ that is, as we now speak, examined. Then, having been found worthy and ordained, provided they acquit themselves well in that office, after a due period of service, they are to be raised to the next order of the ministry, the order of presbyters or priests. It is important to remark that the Greek word translated ‘degree’ in this passage, was ever afterwards employed in the language of the Church to express any one of the three Holy *orders* of the ministry—the order of bishops, the order of presbyters or priests, the order of deacons.³ Now I am afraid it must be said that this funda-

¹ ‘Epist. ad Heliod.,’ vol. i. p. 352. See below, Lect. ii.

² The same *rationale* is evidenced in the case of Philip the deacon with relation to the Samaritans whom he had converted and baptized, but was not able to confirm. Acts viii. 5-17. That case plainly shows

that a man may have a commission to perform *some* spiritual functions without authority to perform *all*.

³ See Suicer’s Lexicon, under the word $\beta\alpha\theta\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$. But comp. one of the Westminster divines, Mr. Sympson, in Dr. John Lightfoot’s Journal. Works, vol. xiii. p. 92.

mental rule of St. Paul is not attended to in the presbyterian system. On the one hand, deacons, as such, *never* ‘purchase to themselves a good degree’ in the sense which St. Paul intended, because they do not serve with the view of becoming preaching presbyters, or pastors, and in fact, I suppose, rarely, if ever, become such. On the other hand, the ‘great boldness of speech’ which a ‘minister’ or preaching presbyter uses, he uses (if it be so) without having ‘purchased,’ as St. Paul speaks, the right to use it, by passing through the lower grade of the ministry which is here prescribed.¹ It is true they may or must have been licentiates, or probationers, for a longer or shorter period, and as such will have been allowed to preach ; but this arrangement only shows the practical value and necessity of the very law which the system, by arrogating the entire clerical function to preaching presbyters or pastors only, does in fact disallow ; for probationers have no substantive position in the ministry, being not ordained. I am aware of the discussion which the divines of the Westminster Assembly held upon the position to be assigned to deacons—a discussion prolonged during the sessions of five days ;² and nothing, in my opinion, could be more unsatisfactory, except as showing how even able men may blunder and become

Discussion
on deacons
held in the
Westminster
Assembly.

¹ The Presbyterian Mosheim represents the presbyters of the first century as having been chosen *chiefly* out of the deacons (*ex diaconis potissimum*). ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 128.

² Between December 15 and 28, 1643. See Lightfoot’s Journal, Works, vol. xiii. pp. 83–93 ; Gillespie’s Notes, p. 5 ; Baillie’s Letters, vol. ii. p. 117.

perplexed over the simplest matter, when, in their deliberations upon such questions, they infringe upon a principle which the Scripture has laid down for its own interpretation,¹ by assuming themselves to be wiser than all who have gone before them. After much disagreement they came to these conclusions:—that ‘the Scriptures do hold out deacons as distinct officers in the Church,’ from Phil. i. 1² and 1 Tim. iii. 8, and that ‘the office is perpetual;’ but they confined its duty ‘to taking care in distributing to the necessity of the poor,’ from Acts iv. 1–4, and denied³ that it ‘pertains to the office of a deacon to preach the word, or administer the sacraments’—a conclusion which is certainly at variance with the universal practice of the Church, and which, taken in its full extent, appears to contravene the teaching of Scripture both elsewhere,⁴ and especially in these words of St. Paul, of which I have been speaking. For instance, let any one read the directions given for deacons in verses 8–12 of 1 Tim. iii. and compare them with the directions given for

¹ Isaiah xxxviii. 19; Jerem. vi. 16; Ps. lxxviii. 5–7; Hebr. xiii. 7,

17.

² A very doubtful text for such a purpose. See Lect. ii. and Synodal Address for 1864, pp. 43, 105.

³ ‘This business held a long and large debate; but at last was put to the question, “whether the deacon be to assist the pastor in preaching and administering the sacraments”; and it was voted negatively; but at

the vote I was absent.’—Lightfoot, ibid. p. 91.

⁴ ‘The seven’ (deacons) in Acts vi. 6 were ordained with imposition of hands; they were ‘men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.’ Philip, one of the seven, preached and baptized, Acts viii. 5, 12. Another, St. Stephen, was much more than an almoner, Acts vi. 12. See Hughes’ 2nd Dissert. in Hickes’ Treatises, vol. iii. p. 353.

presbyters (*episcopi*) in the preceding verses of the same chapter, and he will be persuaded, I think, that both relate to the same kind of ministration, though in different degrees.

Position of
Timothy at
Ephesus.

But to proceed in our examination of this first Epistle to Timothy. We have seen from it that the fundamental principle of the Christian ministry is one not of parity but of gradation, with the diaconate for its base. We have next to see the same principle culminating in the office which Timothy is to hold. St. Paul has placed him in a position in which he requires him to do at Ephesus all that he himself had done till now for that Church. He was to act as a superior, as a governor, not only over deacons, but over presbyters.¹ He is to ordain them, not 'suddenly,' but when examined, and found to be duly qualified (iii. 8-13, v. 22). He is to rebuke the teachers of unsound doctrine (i. 3), and accusations that may be brought against a presbyter he is to receive and try, but only under proper precautions (v. 19). He is himself to teach and exhort (vi. 2). In short, he is directed to do the very same that a modern bishop does in the administration of his diocese.² Now we desire to know what was the meaning of all this, if presbyters alone were the proper persons to do these things, or even were to be allowed to do them? No one can reasonably doubt that there was now, and had been for some time past, a sufficient number

¹ See Bilson, p. 299 sq.

both obliged and accustomed to do?' —Hughes' 2nd Dissert. See Hickes'

² 'What is there which Timothy used to do in the Church of Ephesus, that bishops are not in all Churches

Treatises, vol. iii. p. 326.

of presbyters at Ephesus. That city was the capital of Lydian Asia, and upon this and other accounts, it formed a most important post for the preaching of the Gospel. Accordingly, the great apostle had laboured in it continuously for three years—a longer period than he devoted (so far as we know) to any other of the Churches which he founded. That was between A.D. 54 and 57 (Acts xix. 8-10, xx. 31), about ten years before this appointment of Timothy. During his ministry of those three years it is certain he had ordained presbyters : as we are expressly informed that he did in every church upon his first apostolic journey (Acts xiv. 23).¹ This, I say, may be considered certain, because, a year or two later (A.D. 58 or 59) upon his return from Greece, he sent to Ephesus for ‘the presbyters of the church’ (xx. 17) to come to him at Miletus, in order that he might deliver to them, as their father in Christ, that most solemn and most affectionate episcopal charge which we read in the twentieth chapter of the Acts. And the testimony of that historical narrative is the more valuable, because in St. Paul’s own Epistle to the Ephesians—written while he was a prisoner at Rome in A.D. 62, (that is, about three years after the delivery of that charge, and three years *before* Timothy’s appointment,) there is nothing from which we can discover the then condition of the Ephesian ministry ;² only there

Presbyters
at Ephesus

¹ Not, however, in any case, on his *first* visit to the Churches, but when he visited them a second time on his return homewards. This

observation confirms what is said above, p. 23.

² The only passages in that Epistle which touch upon the subject

are indications that it might soon require the care of a more effectual superintendence than the apostle himself in his absence, and now a prisoner, with the prospect of his approaching end, would be able to bestow.¹

Timothy's relations to them.

It may then, I repeat, be regarded as certain from the narrative of the Acts, that there was already—and had been for some years—a body of ordained presbyters at Ephesus when St. Paul besought Timothy to abide there (1 Tim. i. 3) and shortly afterwards sent to him these written directions. And I ask again, what did these directions mean? Why was this slight to be put upon those presbyters?² Why were they to be superseded, or their office invaded by the appointment of Timothy, if they themselves were competent to perform the same functions? Why, for instance, was Timothy to be instructed to ordain presbyters and deacons at Ephesus, if their ordination could be rightly and lawfully performed by the presbytery which was already there? Is this the way that the wise master-builder is to build up the Church—to pull down what (as some would tell us) he has already perfected? No! the structure was not yet perfect, and he was now only adding to it what it still required—a resident³ Chief Pastor. And a successor of this resident chief is to be

of the ministry are of a general character: viz. iii. 5, where 'apostles and prophets' are mentioned, and iv. 11, where, besides 'apostles' and 'prophets,' are enumerated 'evangelists,' and 'pastors and teachers,' as given to the Church for minis-

terial purposes. See below, p. 80, note 1.

¹ See ch. iv. 3, 14, compared with Acts xx. 29.

² See Bilson, p. 293.

³ But comp. Lightfoot, quoted below, p. 56.

found (as we have seen) still in Scripture—in what St. John wrote at the dictation of Christ Himself—more than thirty years afterwards—to the angel of the same Church, the Church of Ephesus.

But before I can expect you to feel assured that the representation now made of these circumstances is the only true and just representation, I must invite you to do full justice to the arguments which have been urged against it from the presbyterian point of view. First, then, our attention is drawn to a matter of verbal criticism, which, strictly speaking, however, has little or nothing to do with the *facts* of the case. We know that our name ‘bishop’ is derived from the Greek word *επίσκοπος* (*episcopus*), meaning overseer ; and further, we know that this same Greek word is applied to the Ephesian elders, (or presbyters,) in the Acts, xx. 17, and again, in reference, apparently, to those elders (or presbyters) whom Timothy and Titus were to ordain : i. Tim. iii. 2 ; Titus i. 5, 7. I shall have a better occasion to enter fully into this matter in my next lecture, when I come to take up *seriatim* the various objections that have been raised against our view of the Scriptural and historical argument. For the present, it may suffice to observe that a very little knowledge of the use of language, and especially of etymology, should be enough to guard us against the inference that because our word *bishop* is derived from the Greek word *episcopus*, therefore the signification of the former must be the same, or co-extensive with that of the latter. The truth is, they are not identical ; any more than

Objections
taken to fore-
going view--

1. From the
clerical no-
menclature
in New Tes-
tament.

our word deacon, which is derived from the Greek διάκονος (diaconus), is in meaning co-extensive or identical with it. It will be obvious, therefore, that presbyters might be called, as they are, in the Greek *episcopi*, without being bishops, just as apostles might be, and are, in the Greek, called *diaconi*, without being deacons ; in both cases the larger and more general signification of the Greek word including what the more strict and confined English term does not.¹ And so it is with the derivatives of both ; bishopric means only the office of a bishop, as deaconship means only the office of a deacon ; but the Greek *episcope* and *diaconia* not only mean the same, but have also other and very different meanings. After this explanation it will be idle to object that the actual nomenclature of the Church does not (as we admit) corre-

¹ *Diaconus* and its derivatives occur no less than ninety-eight times in the Greek New Testament ; and yet they do not refer to the name and office of a deacon more than six times at the very most (viz. Acts vi. 3 ; Phil. i. 1 ; 1 Tim. iii. 8, 10, 12, 13), even as we understand the office ; and perhaps not even once as Presbyterians understand it. The Westminster divines were willing to allege in support of their lay diaconate, only 1 Tim. iii. 8, where the office appears to be plainly a clerical one, and Acts vi., where the name does not occur. See Lightfoot's Journal, pp. 83-93, and the remark of Dr. Yonge, ibid., p. 97.

Episcopus and its derivatives oc-

cur only eleven times, and it may be doubted (see below, Lecture ii.), whether they are used at all in the strict sense which we now attach to the words bishop, bishopric, episcopate, &c., although our translators, certainly with no advantage to the cause of episcopacy, but rather the reverse, have employed them, as the nearest equivalents in the greater part of those instances : viz. in Acts i. 20 ; Phil. i. 1 ; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2 ; Titus i. 7 ; 1 Peter ii. 25. The other instances are Luke xix. 14 ('visitation') ; Acts xx. 28 ('overseers') ; 1 Peter ii. 12 ('visitation') v. 2 ('taking the oversight') ; Heb. xii. 15 ('looking diligently').

spond with the Scriptural nomenclature. And yet, if the objection should be made, we can at least reply that the same objection lies equally against the presbyterian nomenclature. For instance, we know what a presbyterian *minister* is, and what a presbyterian *deacon* is. Well : minister is simply a translation of the Scriptural word *Diaconus*; but a ‘deacon’ and a ‘minister’ in the presbyterian vocabulary are never the same. Again : we know what a presbyterian ‘elder’ is ; he is mainly a layman. But elder is simply a translation of the Scriptural word *Presbyterus*; and it is more than probable—it is certain (if you will believe, not me, but a high presbyterian authority¹) that the Christian presbyters of the New Testament were never laymen, but always clergymen.

Before I quit this matter for the present, you will, I hope, have understood perfectly that the names bishop, presbyter or elder, and deacon, as we are familiar with them in their English form, are all strictly technical and official, having, not only a limited meaning, but a fixed relation to each other, and that they do not now admit of being used otherwise ; but that it was not so with any one of the original words, *episcopus*, *presbyterus*, and *diaconus*, from which they are etymologically derived. All these in the Greek, when St. Paul used them, were capable of a wide, and varied, and indefinite signification, with little or no marked distinction from each other, and all of them, but especially

Our present
nomencla-
ture of the
ministry ex-
plained.

¹ See ‘The Theory of the Ruling Eldership,’ by Principal P. C. Campbell of Aberdeen.

the last, are so used in the New Testament, as they had been previously used in the Septuagint and in other Greek authors. And this is by no means an uncommon case in regard to the altered use and relationship of many similar words, as will be shown hereafter.¹ Remembering, then, that as *diaconus* and *diaconia* were used of every kind of ministration, high or low, sacred or secular, so *episcopus* and *episcope* were used of various kinds and degrees of superintendence or authority—much as we ourselves now employ the words overseer or superintendent, which have etymologically the same signification—remembering this, we shall find no real difficulty in the fact that those names are applied to presbyters in the New Testament ; we shall readily understand how the Ephesian presbyters, in the Acts xx. 28, may be spoken of by St. Paul as having been made *episcopi*—‘overseers in² the flock to feed the Church of God ;’ how in this Epistle to Timothy, iii. 1, 2, the words, ‘If a man desire the office of a bishop,’ literally, ‘desire the superintendence’ (*τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς*) ; and, again, ‘a bishop,’ literally, ‘*the* superintendent’ (*τὸν ἐπίσκοπον*), then, must be blameless’—how these words *may* refer to the pastoral charge of a congregation, and to the presbyter who is to occupy such a charge.³ Above all, we shall bear in mind that the ques-

¹ See below, Lecture ii., especially the quotation from Bentley.

² Not ‘over,’ as our translation renders it.

³ See the passage from St. Clement of Alexandria, quoted below,

Lect. ii., where, though he recognises bishops as the first order of the threefold ministry, yet he speaks of presbyters as ‘pastors who guide, or rule, the Churches.’

tion with which we are dealing is one, not of names, but of things ; not what Timothy may have been called, or what the presbyters under him were called, but what they were in relation to him and he to them. They were ‘overseers’ in relation to their respective flocks (and the Scripture more than once¹ expressly confines their ‘oversight’ to their flocks), but he was to be *their* overseer. They were clergy ordained ; he was to be an ordainer of clergy.

But besides this apparent difficulty, which has been raised out of the indistinctness of the clerical nomenclature, as used at first in the New Testament and in some of the most ancient of the early Fathers, we are met here by a further objection, which also turns upon a question of words and names, rather than upon any substantial argument or matter of fact. In order to get rid of the conclusive argument which the appointment of Timothy affords to the Scriptural and apostolical authority of a threefold or episcopal ministry, it has been attempted to show that the office which St. Paul assigned to him was the office, not of a bishop, but simply of an evangelist,² and that the office of evangelists was altogether extraordinary, and not to be continued in the Church. This subterfuge is suggested because, in his Second Epistle to this same Timothy, St. Paul has used the words, ‘Do the work of an evangelist’ (*εὐαγγελιστοῦ*, iv. 5). But what are the words which immediately follow these? They are ‘Make full proof of thy ministry,’ literally, ‘thy deaconship’

2. Objection from the name of evangelist being applied to Timothy.

¹ Acts xx. 28 ; 1 Pet. v. 2.

² ‘Irenicum,’ p. 340.

(τὴν διακονίαν), as in the First Epistle he had called him, ‘a good minister,’ literally, ‘a good deacon (διάκονος) of Jesus Christ’ (1 Tim. iv. 6); so that, if in order to exclude Timothy from the episcopate, we are to insist upon his being an evangelist and nothing more, we might with almost equal justice insist upon his being no more than a deacon; whom the presbyterian system will not allow even to preach the Gospel—the very thing which an evangelist (as the name implies) had especially to do. Such are the inconsistencies to which we are reduced when we have recourse to mere verbal subtleties for the evasion of evidence which we are unwilling to accept! The truth is, we know little or nothing about evangelists as distinct officers of the Church. The word occurs only in two other passages of the New Testament, viz. Acts xxi. 8, when Philip, the deacon, whom we know to have preached and baptized (as our own deacons do), is spoken of as ‘Philip the evangelist;’ and Eph. iv. 11, ‘He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,’ &c. We seem, however, to be safe in supposing that they were officers specially employed to preach the Gospel in new regions.¹ But Ephesus, where Timothy was to abide, was not now a new region. Apollos had done the work of an evangelist there² even before St. Paul himself first visited it. And, again, what right have we to conclude that an evangelist or missionary preacher would be entitled to ordain, as Timothy

¹ See Eusebius, H. E., iii. 37.

² Acts xviii. 24, 28. A.D. 54. See Hooker, book v. c. xxviii.

is instructed to do in this Epistle? No. A bishop may well be told to do the work of an evangelist, especially among the heathen part of the population of his diocese, as our colonial and missionary bishops are wont to do; but we see no reason why an evangelist should be told, virtually, as Timothy is, to do the work of a bishop (especially in a Church like Ephesus, where there were presbyters already) if presbyters are the proper persons to do that work. The truth is, that this expression, so far from proving what it has been alleged to prove, proves rather the direct contrary. It proves that Timothy was not an evangelist. For consider: If we were to tell a presbyter to do the work of a presbyter—or any other official to do the work of his office—would not this be paying him a poor compliment? would it not be almost tantamount to an affront? In like manner, to tell an evangelist to do the work of an evangelist would be flat and unmeaning, not to say impertinent. Whereas to tell one who was not an evangelist merely, to do the work of an evangelist beyond his own ordinary duty is natural and consistent with the character and relations of the parties, and with the circumstances of the case. We cannot, therefore, doubt that Timothy was placed at Ephesus, not as an evangelist merely, but in the office which all Christian antiquity has assigned to him, viz. as a bishop. I could produce to you no less than twenty distinct testimonies from ancient writers or documents to this effect,¹ while not a single wit-

Timothy
proved to
have been
bishop of
Ephesus.

¹ A considerable portion of these testimonies is to be found in Bing-

ham, vol. i. p. 63 sq. It is true, as Whitby has pointed out, that there

ness is producible to the contrary, or to throw doubt upon the rest ; but I shall be content to quote only one passage, because the evidence which it affords is of such a kind that it is scarcely possible to conceive any more satisfactory or more complete.¹ I allude to a statement which is contained in the ‘Acts of the Fourth General Council,’ held at Chalcedon, A.D. 451. At that Council, in the course of a debate respecting the filling up of the Ephesian bishopric, which had been declared vacant, it was mentioned by Leontius, bishop of Magnesia, that, ‘From Timothy to the time then present, there had been twenty-seven bishops of that see, all of whom had been ordained in Ephesus itself’;² and though the accuracy of the statement as to all the ordinations having taken place in Ephesus was disputed by some, who put in a counter-claim in favour of Constantinople as the patriarchal see, yet no one questioned the fact or the succession, as Leontius stated it. Among those twenty-seven are doubtless to be reckoned, as successors of Timothy, not only (as I have before remarked) the angel of the same Church, to whom St. John writes in the Book of Revelation, but Onesimus, whom St. Ignatius,

is none of them earlier than the latter part of the third century ; but, he adds, ‘this defect is abundantly supplied by the concurrent suffrage of the 4th and 5th centuries.’—*Pref. to Notes on Ep. to Titus*, p. 316. Dr. Crawford on Presbyterianism, p. 47, note, has quoted the former

remark, but omits the latter.

¹ I do not hesitate to affirm this, notwithstanding the cavils against the evidence which may be seen in ‘Irenicum,’ p. 302 sq.

² Concil. Labb , vol. iv. p. 700. See Usher, vol. vii. p. 47.

in his Epistle to the Ephesians, mentions as their then bishop.¹

But you will perhaps desire to ask me, ‘If Timothy was a bishop, why does not St. Paul call him by some name which would sufficiently designate him as such, and so remove all cause of doubt? And, in return, I would wish to ask you two questions. First, Why are not ‘the seven’ (Acts xxi. 8) of whose appointment we are informed in the sixth chapter of the Acts, and whom we all assume² to have been deacons—why are they not called by that name, or by any other official designation either there or elsewhere in the New Testament? Again, Why were not the disciples of Christ called Christians till they were so called (as we read in Acts xi. 26) at Antioch, some ten years after the beginning of the Christian Church? It will not be denied that many thousands had lived—and not a few had died—who were really Christians during that interval, and yet they had never received the name. Is it not reasonable to suppose that what had happened in the case of so large a number of the earliest members of the Church and happened in the case of the lowest order of the ministry, might have happened also for a time in the case of the highest order of the same ministry, and in regard to one of the first appointments to that order?

No difficulty in the fact that Timothy is not called prelate in the New Testament.

I venture, then, to say, with perfect confidence, that we

¹ See c. ii., a passage preserved in the Syriac version.

which the Westminster divines found the obligation and perpetuity of the deaconship. See below, Lect. ii.

² It is one of the two texts upon

have found the true constitution of the Christian ministry—with a bishop, presbyters, and deacons (in fact, though not yet fully in name) resting upon Scriptural and apostolic authority in the Church of Ephesus—probably the first of the Gentile Churches which was fully built up, as it was certainly the Church in which St. Paul had laboured more continuously than in any other. And the same ministerial organisation which we have thus found in regard to Ephesus, we may also find in regard to Crete. This appears evident from St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, written about the same time. What Timothy, as an individual chief pastor, was instructed to do at Ephesus, that Titus, as an individual chief pastor, was instructed to do in Crete, viz. to ordain presbyters (i. 5) by his own single authority, only taking care that they possessed the necessary qualifications (i. 6–9). And that he did this, in the character of bishop of Crete, and not as a theoretical evangelist, still less as a fancied moderator of a presbytery, is the concurrent, unanimous testimony of Christian antiquity,¹ as it was in the case of Timothy.² On the other hand, there is not a syllable in

¹ See Usher, vol. vii. p. 64. Sancroft's first Sermon, Life, vol. ii. p. 303 sq. and 335; who both consider him to have been metropolitan, or archbishop.

² Professor Lightfoot does not concur in this conclusion. He regards Timothy and Titus only as St. Paul's delegates. 'It is (he says) the conception of a later age, which

represents Timothy as bishop of Ephesus, and Titus as bishop of Crete. St. Paul's own language implies that the position which they held was temporary. In both cases their term of office is drawing to a close when the apostle writes. See 1 Tim. i. 3, iii. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 9, 21; Tit. i. 5, iii. 12, p. 197.' To me it does not seem necessary to draw

Titus proved
to have been
bishop of
Crete.

either of those Epistles to indicate that the government, which till now had been monarchical in St. Paul's own person over both Churches, was henceforward to become oligarchical or republican; which surely was to have been expected if the presbyterian system, and not the episcopal, was to follow after his own decease.

It may be asked, Why did St. Paul write an Epistle to Titus, as well as to Timothy, on Church regimen? Would not the Epistles to Timothy have served for Titus also? I give the answer in the words of one of the most learned of our recent commentators on the New Testament.

'The principal inference—and it is an important one—to be derived from the fact in question, seems to be this: that by writing to the two chief pastors of two places, so different in population and habits as the polished capital of Asia, Ephesus, and the almost savage island of Crete, and by *prescribing the same form of Church regimen to both*, the Holy Spirit has taught the world by St. Paul that this form of Church government, which is no other than that of Diocesan Episcopacy, is designed by the great Head of the Church for all countries and ages of the world.'¹

Examples of
Ephesus and
Crete both
necessary.

this conclusion from any of those passages. But the question is—were not the appointments of Timothy and Titus *such* that the episcopal successions of Ephesus and Crete might be fairly said to have been founded in them respectively? The Professor does not notice the state-

ment made by Leontius at the Council of Chalcedon. See above, p. 54.

¹ Bishop of Lincoln, 'Introduction to the Epistles to Timothy and to Titus,' p. 421. On the other side, comp. Stillingfleet's 'Iren.,' p. 185 sq., where the *obligation* of

Testimony of
St. James
the Less.

Besides the history of St. John upon the question before us, I have now examined the history first of St. Peter and then of St. Paul—one, the special apostle of the Jews dispersed throughout the world, the other, the special apostle of the Gentiles. It remains to examine from the same point of view the history of St. James, surnamed the Less, to distinguish him from the apostle of the same name, the son of Zebedee, and brother of John. And this examination will carry us still further upwards to the fountain head, in regard both to time and place ; the time being the first thirty years of the Church's life, immediately after our Lord's resurrection ; the place being Jerusalem itself, the parent and pattern of all the Churches.¹ We need not enquire whether there were deacons at Jerusalem ; for this we gather from Acts vi. 1-16, although the name of deacon does not there occur. Neither need we ask whether there were presbyters at Jerusalem, for this also we know from Acts xi. 30,² and else-

continuity is denied, because St. Paul (so far as we see in Scripture) makes no provision for a successorship to either Timothy or Titus. Such an objection implies a low estimate of the spiritual guidance vouchsafed to the primitive Church.

¹ See Mosheim, 'De Reb. Christ.', p. 134, and Bishop of Lincoln on Isaiah liv. 1, 'Zion, the mother of us all'—where St. Jerome and the Synodal Epistle of the Council of Constantinople are quoted to prove

that Jerusalem (and not Rome, as the Council of Trent asserts) is 'the Mother of all the Churches.'

² Mosheim, 'De Reb. Christ.', p. 124, infers from the use of *νεώτεροι* in Acts v. 6, (whom he considers to have been deacons before the appointment of 'the seven') that *πρεσβύτεροι* were already instituted in the Church at Jerusalem. See also 'Hist. Eccles.', p. 46, where he interprets 1 Pet. v. 5 in the same way. On the other hand, St. Chrysostom, Hom. xiv. on Acts, has

where ; although, it so happens, there is no record of their institution. Our only enquiry, therefore, is in regard to the first order of the ministry, the order of Bishops. And again it will be seen that the plainest intimation of Holy Scripture concerning matters of fact are sustained by the fullest and most authentic testimonies of Christian antiquity.

During the great forty days after His resurrection Christ appeared on ten different occasions. It was a time of the deepest interest and importance. Everything that He then did and said had a more than ordinary significance. In reference to the whole of that time, St. Luke tells us that He ‘spake to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God’ (Acts i. 3),¹—that is, to the Christian Church. On one of those ten occasions, we learn from St. Paul—what none of the Evangelists had mentioned—that ‘He was seen of James,’ singly (1 Cor. xv. 7). Who was this James, and why was he singled out for this great distinction? Why, again, do we find him introduced repeatedly in the history of the

As seen in various passages of the New Testament.

raised a doubt whether ‘the seven’ were really deacons.

¹ Yet Mosheim, H. E., p. 44, says that neither Christ Himself nor His Apostles gave any express direction (*disertè aliquid præceperunt*) respecting the external form and government of the Church ; whence he infers that such matters are in the main left to the prudence of ecclesiastical and civil rulers. At the same time, he admits that the ar-

rangements made by the apostles were *inspired*, and consequently that the form of government which they established at Jerusalem, and which from them was universally received in all Churches, must be regarded as divine. He will not, however, grant that it must therefore be immutable and perpetual. His own position unhappily forbade him so to do.

Acts, and in the writings of St. Paul, in such a way as to imply some marked pre-eminence even among the apostles—a pre-eminence for which we had not been prepared, and which is nowhere expressly notified or accounted for in the sacred text? For example—why was it that St. Peter (A.D. 44), when he had been miraculously released from prison by an angel, sent, especially, to let James know, as we read in Acts xii. 17? Why was it that on three (if not four) several occasions,¹ which embrace together a period of at least twenty years (A.D. 37–58), James was found by St. Paul in residence at Jerusalem, and visited by that great apostle and missionary of the Gentiles, as one whom it concerned even him to see and to confer with; and that, on the last of those occasions, when he and his fellow travellers ‘went in unto James, all the presbyters were present;’ (like the clergy with their bishop) as if to receive them in solemn synod?² Why was it that, at the first council of the Christian Church, held at Jerusalem (A.D. 50), where not only presbyters, but the apostles were present—why, I ask, was it that James (who, if one of the Twelve at all, which is uncertain,³ was certainly of no special eminence as *such*) spoke after all the rest, claimed to be ‘hearkened to,’ and finally declared in

¹ First visit, A.D. 37, Gal. i. 18, 19; Acts xxii. 17–21; ² Cor. xiii. 1–9. Second visit, A.D. 50, 51, Acts xv. 2; Gal. ii. 1–10. Third visit, A.D. 58, Acts xxi. 18.

² See Acts xxi. 18. Mosheim, ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 134, who

(though he questions the actual episcopate of St. James at Jerusalem) considers it clear, from this text, that he exercised a kind of prelacy. Comp. below, p. 66.

³ See Professor Lightfoot, p. 195.

set form his own ‘sentence,’ as the determination of the assembly? See Acts xv. Why, again, was it that at Antioch (A.D. 51) certain persons of Jerusalem, who represented themselves as having ‘come from James,’ had sufficient influence to induce both St. Peter and St. Barnabas to alter their course of conduct upon a difficult question of the first importance? See Gal. ii. 12. Why is it that St. Jude, at the beginning of his Epistle, denominates himself, and is denominated by St. Luke, both in his Gospel and in the Acts, as ‘brother of James?’ Finally, why is it that in the New Testament the Epistle of James is placed before those of St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude, and is addressed ‘to the twelve tribes scattered abroad?’—and why does the writer of that Epistle give directions to those that are sick to ‘send for the presbyters of the Church?’ and on the other hand, to the presbyters themselves, when so sent for, to ‘pray over them?’ (v. 14).

All these are questions which closely concern the interpretation of the sacred text, and they require an answer from intelligent students of the New Testament. ‘To the law and to the testimony!’ was the cry of old; and for our parts, we have never shrunk from that appeal: only we have been anxious not to put novel and strange interpretations upon the Word of God. We reply, therefore, to these questions as Christian antiquity has taught us to reply. We account for all those passages of the New Testament concerning St. James—and it is worthy of notice that those are the only passages which do relate to him; so that all the inspired testimony which

How those
passages are
to be interpreted.

we have points to one and the same conclusion—we account for them, I say, in the only way in which they ever have been, or can be, satisfactorily accounted for; viz. by the fact that James, during all that time, was bishop of Jerusalem, and as such, the earliest bishop of the Christian Church.¹ I now proceed to bring forward the evidence upon which that fact is established.

Evidence of
the Fathers
respecting
St. James as
bishop of
Jerusalem.

1. Hegesippus, a converted Jew, born about the time of St. John's death, bears witness thus:—‘James, the Lord's brother, who was surnamed the Just, received the government of the Church of Jerusalem *with the apostles.*’ Euseb. ii. 23. Jerome, ‘de Vir. Illustr.’ c. xi.
2. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished before Hegesippus' death, i.e. before the close of the second century, testifies the same more fully thus:—‘Neither Peter, nor James (the son of Zebedee), nor John—though they had been distinguished by our Lord's especial favour—claimed

¹ Professor Lightfoot concurs substantially in this conclusion. He writes: ‘It seems vain to deny, with Röthe, that the position of James in the Mother Church furnished the precedent and the pattern of the later episcopate,’ p. 204. See also pp. 195, 206. But he also draws attention to the fact, that in Acts xi. 30, where the presbyters are mentioned, St. James is not named; and from this (compared with xv. 4, 23; xvi. 4), he infers that ‘though holding a position superior

to the rest, he was still considered a member of the presbytery; that he was in fact the head or president of the college,’ p. 126. Compare what is said below, p. 66 sq.

Eusebius has *μετὰ* with the genitive, but in St. Jerome we read ‘post apostolos,’ as if he had found *μετὰ* with the accusative. The text being so far doubtful, we cannot be quite certain as to the precise meaning of the phrase. Possibly it may mean ‘in accord with,’ i.e. having their concurrence and approval.

to himself the honour to be made bishop of Jerusalem after His ascension, but they chose James the Just to fill that office.'—Institut. lib. vi. ap. Euseb. ii. 1.

3. The author of the 'Clementine Recognitions,' which cannot be placed later than the beginning of the third century, and most probably belong to the second, not only speaks of James as bishop of Jerusalem, but assigns his appointment to our Lord Himself. 'The Church of Jerusalem,' he writes, 'was governed by most upright regulations (*justissimis dispensationibus*) by James, who was ordained bishop in it by the Lord.' Book i. c. xlivi. Patr. Apostol. Cotel., i. p. 503. See also the 'Apostolical Constitutions,' lib. vii. c. xlvi. Ibid. p. 385.

4. Eusebius, who was born about 270 A.D., and became bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, describing the course pursued by the apostles immediately after the ascension of Christ, testifies as follows :—'First, Matthias was chosen by lot to be an apostle in the place of the traitor Judas. There were also appointed, by prayer and laying on of hands of the apostles, approved men, seven in number, . . . to the office of deacons, for the public service. Then, too, it was that James, called the brother of our Lord, whom our forefathers, on account of the excellence of his virtue, surnamed the Just, was called to occupy the see (or *throne*) of the Church at Jerusalem—so our records inform us—as the first bishop.'—H. Ecc., ii. 1. And the same Eusebius, in his Chronicle, under the very year of our Lord's death, A.D. 33, testifies again, 'James, the brother of our Lord, is ordained,

by the apostles, the first bishop of the Church, at Jerusalem.' But to return to his work upon Church history. In several other parts of that work he not only repeats his testimony to the same effect, and records the martyrdom of James, A.D. 62, and the election of Symeon as his successor in the see, but after Symeon, carries on the catalogue of all the bishops in succession down to his own time. See ii. 23; iii. 5, 7, 11; iv. 5; v. 11; vii. 19.

5. Cyril, who was himself bishop of Jerusalem about ten years after the death of Eusebius, A.D. 349, in one of his catechetical lectures, speaks of James as 'formerly bishop of this Church ;' and, again, in another lecture, as 'the first bishop of the diocese.' Lect. iv. 28; v. 21.

6. Epiphanius, who was bishop of Salamis, or Constantia, the metropolis of Cyprus, while Cyril was still alive, A.D. 366–402, mentions James as 'the brother of our Lord, and first bishop of Jerusalem,' adding that 'by him and by the apostles before named, successors of bishops and presbyters were appointed in the House of God.' Hær. lxxix. c. iii. Elsewhere he calls him 'the first who occupied the chair of the episcopate.' Hær. lxxviii. c. vii.; see also Hær. xxix. c. iii.

7. Jerome, who was contemporary with Epiphanius, and who resided near Jerusalem during the latter part of his life, testifies that 'James, who is called the Lord's brother, and surnamed the Just, was ordained bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles immediately after the Passion of our Lord.' He also states that 'he presided over the Church of Jerusalem

for thirty years, i.e. to the seventh year of the Emperor Nero ; when, having been thrown down from the roof of the Temple, he thus suffered martyrdom, and was buried near the spot.' De Vir. Illust., c. ii. See also Commentary on Isaiah, vol. iv. p. 175 (where he is called 'a thirteenth apostle'), and Commentary on Galatians, vol. vii. p. 330 sq.

8. Augustine, who was bishop of Hippo in Africa from A.D. 395-430, testifies that 'James was bishop of the Church at Jerusalem,' and 'the first bishop.'—Vol. ii. p. 118. Ibid. p. 674.

9. Chrysostom, who became bishop of Constantinople in A.D. 398, testifies that 'James was the Lord's brother, and bishop of Jerusalem ;' that 'the Lord Himself is reported to have ordained him, and made him the first bishop ;' that 'because he was bishop in the Church of Jerusalem, therefore he spoke last at the council,' of which we read in Acts xv. ; and that 'when Paul went up to Jerusalem, about questions of doctrine, he immediately visited James : for he was a person so much esteemed that he was the first who was appointed to the episcopate.'—Vol. ix. pp. 386, 414, 279 ; vol. viii. p. 90.

Here then are nine different witnesses—and it would be easy to produce more¹—men of credit, men of intelligence—following one another in succession, down from the time of the apostles to the end of the fourth century—speaking

Summary of
the evidence
concerning
St. James.

¹ E.g. the Ancient Syriac documents, which belong to the Ante-Nicene period, p. 46. Comp. Lightfoot, p. 209.

to us from all parts of Christendom, and all testifying the same thing : that James was bishop of Jerusalem—the first bishop—appointed (as some say) by the apostles, or (as others report) by our Lord Himself ; and thus they enable us to account for those passages of the New Testament to which I before referred, and which, as I then remarked, have received, and can receive, no satisfactory explanation except in accordance with the statements of these witnesses. Those passages were all of the nature of undesigned coincidences, and if we take them collectively, and then corroborate the conclusion to which they lead by the clear and unanimous declarations of witnesses, so many and so trustworthy, we obtain an amount of circumstantial proof which must, I am persuaded, carry complete conviction to every fair and impartial mind.¹

His relation
as bishop to
the (other)
apostles.

It is readily admitted that the twelve apostles, so long as they remained together at Jerusalem, acted in a corporate capacity, after the manner of an episcopal synod ; and in that capacity exercised collectively a general and supreme control ;² so as to leave little or no room for the exercise of

¹ Mosheim, ‘De Reb. Christ.’ p. 135 sq. considers that Jerusalem set the example of episcopacy, and was ‘under a bishop,’ a considerable time (*satis diu*) before the end of the first century. He also admits that James undoubtedly exercised a certain *prelacy* at Jerusalem, especially after the departure thence of the other apostles (for he assumes that James *was* one of the twelve); but he does not allow him to have

been formally the first bishop. His reasoning, however, upon this latter point appears to have little or no weight ; and in denying James’ episcopate while he grants him to have been ‘antistes,’ he makes a distinction without a difference. See below, p. 75 sq., notes, and above, p. 33, note. He takes no notice of 1 Cor. xv. 7.

² See Acts ii. 14, 27, 42; iv. 35, 37; v. 13; viii. 14. That the apostles continued to form an order

an individual and distinct episcopate, such as was afterwards exercised over the Gentile Churches which he founded, by St. Paul. And that collective administration was adopted, we may suppose, in order to give additional weight to the arrangements which they made in common for the organisation of the Church in that city, and which, being thus agreed upon, they would afterwards introduce into all the other Churches which they respectively set on foot.¹ If they remained, as they appear to have done, at Jerusalem, during the events recorded in the first eight chapters of the Acts, up to the conversion of St. Paul in the ninth chapter, this would include a period of only four years;² not too long for the purpose contemplated, nor, perhaps, for the preparation required before they set off upon their several missions

distinct from that of presbyters, is proved by the double use of the article, which our translation unhappily has not preserved, in Acts xv. 6, and elsewhere in that chapter; '*the apostles and the elders (presbyters).*' It is true the *copula sine articulo* occurs in verse 2 of that chapter, but not without a various reading. Compare below, Lect. ii.

¹ See Mosheim, 'De Reb. Christ.', p. 77, note, and p. 112. He assigns the observance of the Lord's Day as the Christian Sabbath, the origin of parochial churches (p. 116), 'and the institution of both the presbyte-

rate and diaconate' (p. 124) to the common counsels of the apostles at Jerusalem. See also pp. 132, 134.

² According to Apollonius, a writer of the second century, the apostles remained together at Jerusalem twelve years. See Clem. Alex. 'Strom.', iv. 5, sub fin., and Euseb. H. E., v. 18. But this calculation (though followed more or less by Greswell, ii. p. 58) seems excessive, and not altogether in accordance with the sacred text. That *eventually* 'they went forth and preached *everywhere*', we learn from Mark xvi. 20.

throughout the world.¹ But surely there is nothing in these circumstances which militates in the least degree against the conclusion at which we have arrived in regard to the episcopal appointment of James. It is still quite probable that that appointment might have been indicated by our Lord Himself, (as is stated by the author of the Clementine Recognitions, and by St. Chrysostom,) and yet that three or four years must be allowed to elapse, in that critical period of the Church's infancy, before the plan would be fully ripe for execution ;² and when ripe, it is equally probable that it would (according to the statements of Clement of Alexandria, of Eusebius, and Jerome) be carried formally into effect by the apostles ; who, in the meantime, would seem to have retained the chief administration of the Church in their own hand.³ All this, I say, is quite probable ; and quite consistent with supposing that James may have held during those few first years a position of temporary subordination to the twelve, similar to that of some ancient bishops, resident in monasteries, who, within the monastery, were subordinate to the abbot. Be this, however, as it may,—the first Scriptural evidence to which I have referred in support of James' episcopate, and permanent residence, as bishop, at Jerusalem (excepting only his private interview with our

¹ See Euseb. H. E., iii. c. i.; and Greswell, 'Dissert.', where other testimonies from the Fathers are quoted at length. Vol. i. pp. 146-150.

² Compare the gradual process

by which the twelve themselves were raised by our Lord to the full exercise of the apostolic office. See above, p. 20.

³ See Greswell, vol. ii. p. 59.

Lord before His ascension), does not occur in the history till three years after St. Paul's conversion, or, in other words, till seven years after the great day of Pentecost.¹ Before that time to have placed him singly in a position of public pre-eminence might only have tended to mark him out for instant death : but from that time forward, or shortly after, when 'the Churches had rest throughout all Judæa, and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified,'² it would seem, as I have shown, absolutely certain that all Christian Church authority at Jerusalem, even when the most eminent of the apostles were present there,³ was made to culminate in St. James ; just as it is certain that, after James' martyrdom (in A.D. 62), all Church authority culminated in his successor, Symeon, the second bishop, and so in those who followed after. Doubtless we might have felt more thoroughly satisfied upon the point, if we had found the first institution of the episcopate expressly recorded in the sacred text ; but such is not the way in which (as I shall show hereafter) it has pleased God to deal with us in regard to other matters of the same or scarcely less importance ; it is not the way in which He has actually dealt with us in the case of the presbyterate,⁴ the first institution of presbyters being nowhere

The time at
which he
would be
likely to ap-
pear as
bishop.

¹ See Gal. i. 19 ; Acts ix. 27.

'antistites.' See above, p. 66, note.

² Acts ix. 31. About A.D. 38. Euodias is placed by Eusebius as first bishop of Antioch in A.D. 43. See Clinton F. R., appendix, p. 548. And even according to Mosheim, James was the first of Christian

³ As at the council of which we read in Acts xv. Greswell supposes that Peter and James were the only apostles, at that time, present in Jerusalem. Vol. i. p. 145.

⁴ And perhaps in the case also of

recorded in the New Testament ;¹ and if this omission is to be urged as weakening the proof in favour of episcopacy, it must also be urged as weakening the proof (if, indeed, there be any Scriptural proof,) in favour of presbytery. At the same time, it must be borne in mind, as tending to account for the incidental and unobtrusive manner in which the position of James is indicated rather than expressed in the sacred narrative, that the authority of the Jewish high priest was still, throughout the whole time of James' episcopate, partially recognised by the Christian community ;² and that, both on this account, and in order not to provoke his jealousy in particular, and the furious hostility of the Jews in general, there was manifest occasion for secrecy and concealment.³ We read in the Acts (xxi. 20), that so late as A.D. 58—only four years before James' martyrdom—there were ‘many thousands’ of converted Jews, who, nevertheless, were ‘all zealous for the law,’ i.e. the Mosaic system of ritual and government,⁴ and who therefore, we may suppose, would be unfriendly to any measure tending to give unnecessary prominence to the Christian hierarchy.

Summing up
of the evi-
dence as
derived from
the New Tes-

I now return to the point of time from which we set out upon the foregoing Scriptural and historical investigation, viz. the end of the first century. But before we pursue the

the diaconate. See above, p. 66, note, for the opinion of Mosheim.

¹ They are first mentioned in Acts xi. 30.

² See Acts xxiii. 5.

³ See the author's Synodal Ad-

dress for 1864, p. 30, and above, p. 24.

⁴ See also concerning St. Paul himself, Acts xviii. 18, 21, 22; xx. 16; xxi. 26.

enquiry further let us pause, in order to review the evidence which so far has been laid before us.

tament and
the aposto-
lic age.

We have been looking back from that original starting-place, over a period of seventy-seven years, up to the very first beginning of the Church's life, and what have we seen? Inverting now the order in which that survey has been taken, and tracing it downwards in its natural course, we have seen, first, James in Jerusalem acting as bishop, speaking as bishop, in residence as bishop with his presbyters around him, and, moreover, as bishop, writing to the members of his scattered flock an epistle, in which he reminds both them and their presbyters of their relative position and duty towards each other; and what we have thus seen done at Jerusalem, we have every reason to conclude was designed to set the example to all other Churches. Further, we have seen St. Paul, in regard to the various Gentile Churches which he founded, at first and during the greater part of his ministry, writing and acting as bishop, in his own person, with superiority over presbyters, and, towards the close of his career, devolving his episcopal powers, including ordination, upon Timothy at Ephesus, and upon Titus in Crete. We have seen St. Peter acting as bishop, more especially in relation to a portion of the converted Jews, dispersed throughout the world; and writing an epistle, in which, while he descends to call himself their fellow-presbyter, he nevertheless reminds his presbyters of their duty as St. James had done, and exhorts them, as St. Paul had done, to superintend and feed their respective flocks (v. 1, 2). We have seen

Its results.

St. John, in relation like St. Paul to a portion of the Gentile Churches,¹ though writing once and again with condescension similar to that of St. Peter (ii. Ep. 1, iii. Ep. 1), yet acting as an arch- or metropolitical bishop, at the direction of Christ Himself, by the letters which he addressed to the angels or bishops of the Seven Churches ; not upbraiding them because they were bishops, but impressing upon them the duties which as bishops they were required to perform. All this we have seen in Scripture itself ; and, moreover, we have seen it all abundantly confirmed by the earliest testimonies of trustworthy, though uninspired, Christian authors ; testimonies which, in regard to any matter of mere secular history, would be accepted without controversy. Those authors—and Scripture with them (as we have seen) to a great extent—combine to represent to us, within this primitive and apostolic age, the Church of Jerusalem as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Church of Antioch as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Church of Ephesus as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Church of Rome as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Church of Alexandria as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Church of Crete as constituted with a prelatical ministry, the Churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, all severally constituted with a prelatical ministry. And ancient records, more or less

List of the
earliest
prelatical
ministries.

¹ It would seem from Gal. ii. 9, if not exclusively, to ‘the circumcision.’
that St. John, as well as St. James
and St. Peter, went, at first, chiefly,

authentic, would enable us to extend this catalogue¹ of pre-latical ministries to other places, still within the same time, that is, be it remembered, the first seventy-seven years of the Church's life. If ever 'authoritative example' is to be allowed to supply the place of positive precept—as we all allow it to do in the case, for instance, of the canon of Scripture, and of the Christian Sabbath—surely we may make the same allowance in the present question. For, to state once more the conclusion of this portion of our argument in a comprehensive form, we have seen that the facts which have been brought before us all conspire to represent and establish one and the same principle, viz. 'the apostolic rule merging into the episcopal.'² We have seen that the candid admission of Dr. Tulloch—if we will examine the

¹ See Bishop Taylor, 'Episcopacy Asserted,' c. xviii. Works, vol. vii. p. 72. Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', pp. 539–545. Lightfoot, pp. 207, 211 sq., 214.

² See Sadler's 'Church Doctrine—Bible Truth,' p. 272. Professor Lightfoot would probably demur to the statement of the text. He regards the episcopate as having been developed out of the presbyterate. 'If,' he writes, 'bishop was at first used as a synonym for presbyter, and afterwards came to designate the higher officer under whom the presbyters served, the episcopate properly so called would

seem to have been developed from the subordinate office. In other words, the episcopate was formed not out of the apostolic order by localisation, but out of the presbyterial by elevation; and the title which originally was common to all came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them.'—P. 194. I do not see why both views may not stand, as applicable in different places, and under different circumstances. Compare Lect. ii. sub init. bishops regarded as successors of the apostles; and Hooker an Bentley, quoted below, in the same Lecture.

matter fairly and thoroughly—requires to be extended so as to reach not only ‘the later age of St. John,’ but the later age of St. Peter, the later age of St. Paul, the later age of St. James ; in all of which we have found ‘episcopacy as an order distinct from presbyters. This is simply a matter of history, which no candid enquirer can deny.’

Uniformity
of the results
so far ob-
tained.

That the apostles, in the first foundation of Churches, did to a certain extent adapt the arrangements which they made according to the necessities of each particular case, this we do not deny ;¹ but the uniformity of result in which (as we have seen) those arrangements issued, has left us no room to doubt that, however separated, they were working together upon one and the same foreordained plan. And what we have already seen will become, as we proceed in our historical investigation, still more manifest. We shall be less and less inclined to agree with those who have supposed² that different apostles, proceeding upon different principles, adopted different forms of organisation in the constitution of the ministry ; because we shall find it impossible to conceive how *such* differences, if they had existed, should have disappeared and coalesced into the uniform system which everywhere prevailed in the second century, without the presence of any influence whatever to account for such

¹ See above, p. 23, and note.

² See ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 322, 331, 341 ; where a view, not to be rejected if kept within due bounds, is exaggerated to serve the author’s theory.

St. Ignatius expressly asserts that the same episcopal ministry was established *everywhere* by the apostles. See below, Lecture ii.

amalgamation. In saying this, we are quite content that the obligation derived from apostolic practice should be referred not merely to that practice itself (which, we grant, has not been held sufficient to bind the Church in matters of lesser moment),¹ but to ‘the law and reason which was the ground of it.’ And that law and reason we consider to be the necessity of union and order ; which, as we before² observed, are not to be obtained without uniformity of constitutional organisation throughout the body.

Now, in opposition to all this evidence, inspired and uninspired, what is the ground which was formerly taken up by the opponents of prelacy ? The more learned and more moderate disputants (such as Mosheim, in the last century,³ a German Lutheran, and therefore a presbyterian from inherited necessity), have indeed admitted the primitive and apostolic⁴ institution of an ‘antistes,’ or superior, who was

What is to be said on the other side.

View of the more learned disputants, such as Mosheim.

¹ See ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 341–345.

² See above, p. 18 sq., and again, below, Lect. iii., and comp. ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 347, 371.

³ He died in 1755.

⁴ See Mosheim ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 132. ‘Viventibus et probantibus apostolis.’ In ‘Hist. Ecc.,’ p. 47, he adds to what is stated in the text : ‘Videtur Ecclesia Hierosolymitana, numerosa in primis, apostolis delapsis et ad exteris gentes profectis, *antistitem* sibi primum elegisse, cuius exemplum reliquæ familiæ

(branches of the Church) paulatim secutæ sunt.’ Comp. ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 134. He had before remarked : ‘Ecclesiæ Hierosolymitanæ exemplum, *ex præcepto apostolorum*, reliqui omnes cœtus in diaconis constituendis imitabantur.’ Why are we to suppose a precept of the apostles ‘for the appointment of deacons,’ and not also for the appointment of ‘antistites,’ both in Jerusalem and in all the other Churches, when the proper time arrived for such appointments?

called first ‘angelus,’ and afterwards ‘episcopus,’¹ and who, they grant, was permanently ‘set over’ his brother presbyters so soon as their number was sufficient to render his appointment proper and desirable—in short, a nascent prelate, such as was to be expected in a nascent Church. By these admissions they have allowed all that is pleaded for by moderate Episcopalianists (who desire to see neither dioceses too large, nor diocesans too lordly); only they have failed to recognise an actual three-fold ministry in the earlier apostolic period, because, as they remark,² in the Acts of the Apostles and in St. Paul’s epistles, they see mention made of presbyters and deacons, but none of an individual as exercising rule and authority in any Church. They forgot that James at Jerusalem (by their own confession³) and St. Paul himself, and Timothy and Titus after him, are all examples of such individuals, so far as was possible and suitable in the circumstances of that

¹ Mosheim, ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 133; ‘Hist. Ecc.,’ p. 47.

² See Mosheim, ‘De Reb. Christ.,’ ibid.

³ Mosheim speaks of James as the ‘antistes’ of the Church at Jerusalem, ‘Hist. Eccl.,’ pp. 32, 47. What is the difference between *antistes* and *prælatus*, or *præpositus*? this last word being used by him as well as the first. He also says of James, ‘cœtui Hierosolymitano *præfuit*.’—‘De Reb. Christ.,’ p. 134. In like manner Dr. P. C. Campbell, admitting as undeniable ‘the all but

universal prevalence of episcopacy very soon after the death of the apostles,’ yet considers that ‘this episcopacy was not *præatical* but *presidential*.’—*On Lay Eldership*, p. 75. Would it not be difficult to distinguish between the two? Johnson’s Dictionary defines a *president* ‘one placed with authority over others.’ Dr. Campbell adds, ‘and even if sanctioned, yet not *prescribed*, by the apostles’ — a distinction which it would be still more difficult to establish. See above, p. 75, note 4.

infant age ; and they also forgot that bishops when they address their clergy—as St. Paul addressed, for instance, the Ephesian presbyters at Miletus—do not commonly speak of their own duties, but of the duties of those who are subject to their superintendence. Other less learned and less scrupulous opponents, such as our own Scotch and English Anti-Prelatists in the 17th century, (who could not but feel conscious that they had placed themselves in a position which was aggressive in the extreme against all episcopal jurisdiction,) determined, in the first place, to listen to no evidence, however trustworthy, external to Scripture (even though the evidence might only profess to give the sense of Scripture, as the first Christians understood it) ; and then took care that Scripture should be interpreted only in such a way as to give no support to the authority against which they had rebelled. Take, for instance, the case which has had most influence upon posterity, and which will enable me to substantiate more easily what has now been said—I mean the case of the Westminster Assembly. That Assembly consisted of about one hundred and twenty English ‘divines’ and thirty laymen, assisted by four ‘divines’ and two laymen, as commissioners from Scotland.¹ It was appointed by an ordinance of the Long Parliament, which

Conduct of
the West-
minster
Assembly.

¹ Hetherington’s ‘History of the Westminster Assembly,’ p. 112, where the names may be seen, 151 in all. The English lay members consisted of ten lords and twenty commoners. There were twenty-one

members added afterwards, in consequence of non-attendance or death of others, p. 114. Several Episcopalians attended at first, but none after the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, p. 135.

set forth, that ‘Whereas it has been declared by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament that the present Church government by archbishops, bishops, &c. &c., is *evil*, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom, &c. &c., therefore they are resolved that the same shall be *taken away*, and that such a government shall be settled in the Church as may be *most agreeable to God’s holy word*.’ This ordinance passed on June 12, 1643.¹ In obedience to it, but in disobedience to the royal proclamation of June 22, which forbade their meeting, the Assembly met; and on September 25 all the members who were present, together with the members (228 in number) of the House of Commons, subscribed, in the Church of St. Margaret, Westminster, the Solemn League and Covenant, by which they pledged themselves to endeavour ‘the extirpation of prelacy.’² This they did before they had made any attempt whatever to discover the kind of form of Church government which would be ‘most agreeable to God’s word’—a duty which they did not commence till the 23rd of the following month.³ Thus, as they had met to carry out, so far as episcopacy was concerned, a foregone conclusion on the part of the Parliament, so they themselves were self-excluded from a full and fair examination of the Scripture upon the matter, and simply

¹ Hetherington, p. 97.

² Ibid. pp. 111, 127, 130. Lightfoot, pp. 10, 15. Baillie understood ‘all kinds of episcopacy.’ Letters, vol. ii. pp. 228, 252 sq. Bishop Leigh-

ton, however, after the Restoration, argued otherwise. Works, iv. p. 386 sq.

³ Lightfoot’s Journal, p. 26.

prejudged and condemned episcopacy without a hearing.¹ Under such circumstances nothing was left for them but to endeavour, by whatever means, to make good that which they had taken up—taken up, must it not be said? most unadvisedly, most presumptuously. And how did they contrive to do this? In the first place, they pronounced the apostles to have been officers only *pro tempore*, and entirely extraordinary; and then they drew a line, hard and fast, between them and any other church officers whom they, the Assembly, might afterwards allow to be ordinary and permanent. They alleged as a ground for this distinction, in regard to the apostles, that there is ‘no promise in Scripture for their continuance;’² whereas we think we see such a promise very clearly in the concluding words of St. Matthew’s Gospel. ‘Lo! I am with *you* alway, even unto the end of the world;’³

The resolu-
tions
adopted by
the Assem-
bly contrary
to Scripture.

¹ The utterly exclusive and self-sufficient animus of the Assembly is evident from what Baillie, one of the Scotch commissioners, wrote under date April 19, 1644, respecting John Davie, who had been chosen as one of the superadded members of the Assembly: ‘If he should come to us with the least tincture of *episcopacy*, or *liturgic learning*, he would not be welcome to any I know.’—Vol. ii. p. 166. In writing some months afterwards to the same correspondent, he admits ‘the impossibility ever to have gotten England reformed by human means, as

things here stood, *without their brethren’s help* (i.e. from Scotland). The *learnedest* and most considerable part of them were *fully episcopal*.—Ibid. p. 250. Comp. Lecture ii.

² See Lightfoot, p. 27. Thus they necessarily granted the entire absence of connection (which some Presbyterians have been anxious to maintain) between the apostolic order and that of presbyters. See above, p. 66, note 2.

³ ‘These words belong to the apostles as to a *perpetual corporation*.—Bishop of Salisbury’s *Five Discourses*, p. 45. See also below,

if not also in Ephesians iv. 11-13 : ‘He gave some (to be) apostles . . . for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry . . . till *we all come* to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’¹ And, moreover, we might ask, is there any promise in Scripture more distinct, or, strictly speaking, any promise at all for the perpetuation of presbyters, or of deacons? However, by this proceeding (which constituted $\tauὸ\pi\rho\bar{\omega}\tauον\psi\varepsilon\nu\deltaος$ —their fundamental mistake), they at once excluded every argument adverse to ministerial parity which might be drawn from the examples of apostolical prelacy, such as you have heard. It mattered nothing to them that the ancient Fathers not only call the apostles ‘bishops,’² which they were according to the greater exigencies of the Church, as it was at the first; but they have

p. 85, note. Dr. Crawford, p. 109, (where he remarks that ‘Christ at His ascension made no promise that the apostolic office should be *perpetuated*, but simply that *all faithful* ministers of the Gospel, when *baptizing*, &c., might in all ages rely on His countenance and assistance,’) appears to have forgotten Tertullian ‘De Bapt.,’ c. xvii., where we read, ‘Dandi quidem Baptismum habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus; dehinc Presbyteri et Diaconi; non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate.’

¹ I am aware that this observation involves the consequence that the other officers there named were also

to be continued; viz. prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers; and such I believe to be the true interpretation of the passage. The main functions of them all are still given to the Church ‘for the perfecting of the saints,’ &c. Bishops perform more or less the main functions of all *five*; presbyters the main functions of the four last; deacons the main functions of three—of the prophet, as reading and expounding Scripture; of the evangelist, if licensed to preach the Gospel; of the teacher, as catechising the young.

² See Bilson, p. 295.

And to the
testimony of
the Fathers.

also called bishops ‘apostles,’¹ which (it may be said) they are, according to the lesser exigencies of the Church as it now is. At a later period of their discussions, however, the presbyterian part of the Assembly, when they came to endeavour to construct from Scripture their own preconceived system, were not a little perplexed by the manifest rank which the apostles, before their dispersion, occupied at Jerusalem. It was wished to establish the proposition, that ‘the several congregations in Jerusalem were (from the first) under one presbyterial government,’ and in order to reconcile this with the recorded facts, it was argued that the apostles, though gifted with authority proper to their office as such, were also presbyters, and that it was as presbyters, not as apostles, they acted in the government of the Church !² The discussion was a long and tedious one (from the 1st to the 14th of March, 1644), in consequence of the opposition of the Independents ; but during all that time no one, on

Perplexities
of West-
minster
Assembly.

Opposition
on part of
the Inde-
pendents

¹ See Bingham, i. p. 66 sq., quoting Theodoret and Pseud. Ambrose. See also Jerome, Comment. in Philem. i, where he gives to Timothy (and apparently also to Sosthenes and Silvanus) the title of apostles, vol. vii. p. 606 ; and on Gal. i. 19 he says that ‘in course of time others were ordained *apostles* by those whom the Lord had chosen.’ —Ibid. p. 330.

² The entry in Lightfoot’s Journal

is curious, as indicating the difficulty in which they found themselves : March 6, 1644, *afternoon*.—‘Then fell we upon our proposition about a presbyterian government in Jerusalem before the dispersion (of the apostles) ; and there was *a good long silence* before anyone spake to it, and it was called to the question. At last Mr. Seaman spake to it.’ —Page 199. For the full discussion see pp. 186–214.

either side, appears to have drawn attention either to the fact¹ that in Acts xv. 6 the double use of the article proves '*the apostles*' to have formed an order distinct from that of '*the presbyters*,' or '*elders* ;' or to the historical testimony in favour of the prelacy of James,² and to the argument in support of it to be deduced from that same chapter.

How the cases of Timothy and Titus were dealt with.

But to return to 'the fundamental mistake' made, as I have said, by the Westminster divines in denying continuity to the apostolic body, as such. The position of secondary apostles, such as Barnabas, they evidently found an embarrassing one;³ and as they could not so easily reconcile it with the designs which they had in view, therefore, passing them by, their next step was to extend their category of church officers, temporary and extraordinary, so as to include *evangelists* also. By this means they seemed to themselves to get rid of the case of Timothy, upon the plea (to which I have before referred) that he is instructed by St. Paul to 'do the work of an evangelist ;' the fact that he is called by various ancient writers bishop of Ephesus, and never an evangelist merely, not having been considered (so far as appears) worthy of notice. And when Timothy had been thus disposed of as an officer extraordinary, and not to be continued, in

¹ See above, p. 66, note. This omission is the more remarkable because, on a former occasion, one of the members (Dr. Temple) showed that he was aware of the difference implied in the use of the copula *with* or *without* the article

in Greek syntax. See Lightfoot, p. 54.

² The only references to James in Lightfoot's Journal are at pp. 209, 211.

³ Lightfoot, p. 28.

defiance of the episcopal succession which history records at Ephesus from Timothy downwards ; when this had been effected, it was an obvious expedient to dispose of Titus also in the same way ; though he is *not* told to do the work of an evangelist, nor is the title of evangelist ever applied to him, either in the Scripture or elsewhere among the ancients ; and though he is called expressly bishop of Crete by Eusebius (following, as he says, previous records), by St. Jerome, by St. Chrysostom, by Pseud. Ambrose, by Theodoret.¹ So far, then, from the Assembly's point of view—utterly narrow and unauthorised as it was—all at the first appeared smooth and successful. It was not long, however, before they themselves began to discover, as arising out of these conclusions, sundry inconveniences which threatened to prove fatal to the whole procedure. On the one hand, the denial of a successorship to the apostles in the episcopal order, seemed to leave little logical ground for a continual succession in their own order, such as the Presbyterians were anxious to maintain against the Independents. On the other hand, the removal not only of the apostles, but of Timothy and Titus into the rank of officers extraordinary and not to be continued, had left little or no Scriptural authority for the perpetuity of any ordination other than that which the Independents argued for, viz. ordination conveyed simply by the ruling members themselves of each separate congregation.² I have already

No Scriptural authority left for Ordination.

¹ See the passages quoted in Bingham, vol. i. p. 64.

The main discussion was upon 1 Tim. iv. 14, whether 'the presbytery'

² Hetherington, pp. 172, 175.

shown in part, and shall hereafter show much more fully, that these conclusions of the Assembly, in denying bishops to be proper successors of the apostles, and in denying Timothy and Titus to have been among the first of such successors, were entirely at variance, upon the matter of fact, with the conclusions of the primitive Christians ; who must have known the truth, and who had no prejudice (as the Westminster divines certainly had) to warp their judgment. The primitive Christians did not, indeed, doubt that the twelve apostles and St. Paul held in many respects a peculiar and unique position ; and so far they would have agreed —as we agree¹—with the Westminster divines ; but this persuasion did not lead them to infer that the apostolic order, in all its ordinary functions of ruling, ordaining, confirming, preaching, and ministering the worship and sacraments of the Church, was to be discontinued at the apostles' death. On the contrary, they held that the apostles them-

'preaching presbyters,' as the Presbyterians argued, or to 'ruling elders,' as the Independents wished. It does not seem to have occurred to either party, that the preposition 'with' (not 'by') implies the effectual action of a higher authority. See below, p. 89.

¹ Champions of episcopacy have sometimes erred in breaking down this barrier. I agree with Dr. Crawford, that 'no one can read St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy without perceiv-

ing how wide and marked an interval there was between their respective positions.'—*Presbytery or Prelacy*, p. 37, note. In part, this would be owing to difference of age, and still more, to the fact that one was the convert and disciple of the other. At p. 43, Dr. Crawford overlooks the circumstance that *we* consider the germ not only of episcopal, but of metropolitan authority, to be Scriptural, and derived from the apostles.

selves made provision¹ for the continuation of their own order, in regard to all those functions, and that in so doing they acted in accordance with Christ's implied directions, when He gave the promise to which I just now referred.²

But supposing that both these cases—the case of the apostles, and the case of Timothy and Titus—were capable of being disposed of as the Westminster divines determined ;—supposing this, there would still remain—first, the difficulties that arise out of the case of James at Jerusalem ; who is seen in *Scripture* to have occupied a position, apparently permanent and distinct from his apostleship (if he was an apostle)—a position which was at once peculiar and pre-eminent ; and who is seen in *history* to have had after his death a regular continuation of successors in the same position. Next, there would remain the difficulties that arise out of the ‘angels’ of the Seven Churches. And, lastly, there would remain the difficulties that arise out of the cases of the episcopal successions at Rome, at Antioch, at Alexandria, which the most ancient Church history records as having existed during the apostolic age. Yes ; when

No notice
taken of
St. James.

Nor of the
‘angels’ in
Revelation.

¹ See St. Clement of Rome, c. xlvi. (quoted in appendix to the author's Syn. Address, 1864, p. 108 sq.), who was himself one of those so appointed by the apostles. The passage, however (though so understood by Röthe), admits of a different interpretation. Comp. Lightfoot, pp. 201, 203.

² See above, p. 79. Matth. xxviii. 20. The words in Acts i. 2—‘He through the Holy Ghost had given commandment to the apostles whom He had chosen’—seem to determine the application of the text of St. Matthew to the apostles, and to them only.

Nor of the
great epis-
copal suc-
cessions at
Rome, An-
tioch, &c.

you have got rid of the apostles (as prelates wholly extraordinary and only temporary), you have still to get rid of the prelatical successions, founded by apostles, in all the most conspicuous centres of European, Asiatic, and African civilisation—and in some instances continued and traceable down even to the present time ; you have still to get rid of these ; and these you never can get rid of so long as authentic history shall continue to be read and received as such. What then, I ask, was the Westminster Assembly to do with these last-named difficulties ? So far as can now be discovered from the reports of their discussions as given by three of their own body, Lightfoot, Baillie, and Gillespie, they took no notice of them at all ! Subsequent champions of the presbyterian cause, when challenged to account for them, have followed, for the most part, the same course ;¹ and whenever they have departed from it, what is the utmost they have been able to advance ? Some have been content with the modern fiction of a non-prelatical moderator ; the skirts of whose official robe (scantily as he himself is clad) are to be extended so as to cover all the ordinary precedents of primitive prelacy, and this, although moderatorship, as regards either name or thing, has no existence in Scripture or any ancient author. Others have had recourse to the ancient dream of St. Jerome, respecting quarrelsome presbyters, who, in spite of apostolic rule and to the disparagement of apostolic forethought, soon required a *bonâ fide* prelate to keep

¹ The case of James is not alluded to in the Free Church Catechism of 1847, nor in 'Presbyterianism Defended,' by Dr. Crawford.

them in good order ; or, again, it may be that he himself was too proud, too arrogant and ambitious, in those days of persecution and martyrdom, to remain in his proper rank !—Dreams which, I trust, I shall be able to dispel effectually in my next lecture. Only let me add here, in reference to those primitive successions of bishops at Rome, and Antioch, and Alexandria, and to the silence which has been maintained regarding them ; however such silence may have been allowed to pass unnoticed in the days of the Westminster Assembly (when there was no certain Chronicle of facts, such as that of Fynes Clinton, easily accessible to the general reader), in the present age, when we are properly required to take into account the discoveries of science in the interpretation of the word of God, there can be no sufficient reason why we should not be obliged to pay at least equal regard to the testimonies of history. The Westminster Assembly has pronounced that ‘it pleased God to create, or make of nothing, the world and all things therein in the space of six days,’ which we know from science to be untrue. The same Westminster Assembly has pronounced that it pleased Christ and His apostles to institute the ministry of His Church in a republican parity, which we know from history, sacred and profane, to be equally untrue.

And now, of all the incidents in this discussion, so far as we have pursued it hitherto, that which must strike a competent enquirer as most remarkable, is this : that a system which was founded upon certain fact should have been overthrown to make room for one resting only upon uncertain

Conclusions
of Assembly
not founded
on Scripture.

speculation ; and that a system which had been objected to as resting insufficiently upon Scriptural proof, should have been supplanted by one which (if the truth is to be spoken) positively rests upon no Scriptural proof at all. Let me show what I mean by this latter statement. Of course, when we establish the existence of the threefold ministry, we establish, *ipso facto*, the existence of clerical presbyters ; and there is one passage of the New Testament, and only one, viz. 1 Tim. iv. 14, in which presbyters are spoken of, apparently, as gathered into a presbytery.¹ But even from that passage, and still more from every other in which presbyters are mentioned, we may see plainly they were not supreme ; they were not self-sufficient ; they had some one over them, some one from whom, as a superior, they received directions. The presbyters at Jerusalem received directions from St. James ; the presbyters of the Jewish dispersion received directions from St. Peter ; the presbyters in Crete received directions *first* from St. Paul, *then* from Titus ; the presbyters at Ephesus received directions *first* from St. Paul, *then* from Timothy, *then* from the angel whom St. John addresses. The presbyters of the other six Churches of the Apocalypse received directions, some of them probably, if not all, from St. Paul *first*, then from St. John, and then from their respective angels or bishops. And in that single passage of St. Paul to Timothy in which the presbytery is mentioned, the language which is used, and which has reference to ordination, implies that there had been an authority engaged in that

¹ See 'Irenicum,' pp. 335, 353 sq.

sacred function, associated indeed with the presbyters (as is still the practice in our own ordinations), but superior to them ; for the ordination is spoken of as administered ‘with’ the laying on of their hands, but not ‘by’ it, as is the case in the ordination which St. Paul himself administered, perhaps on the same occasion, to the same Timothy : ‘ Stir up the gift of God which is in thee *by* the putting on of my hands,’ 2 Tim. i. 6.

But more than this. It is certain that we have express provision made in the New Testament (for instance, by St. Paul) for carrying on the ministry and government of the Church by the authority of individuals, such as Timothy and Titus ; and it is equally certain that we have no provision made for the carrying on the ministry and government of the Church by the authority of a board of coequal officers without a superintendent. St. Paul directed the Ephesian presbyters, who met him at Miletus, to take heed to themselves and to the flock ; but he did not authorise them to ordain other presbyters, or to exercise discipline over each other ; as he did afterwards authorise Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete, both to ordain clergy, and to superintend them in the discharge of their duty. It is well observed by a modern writer, that ‘The Three Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul are the only Epistles¹ in which there are any directions whatsoever respecting the government of the Churches. In no other Epistle is there one word respecting the choice, qualifications, or ordination of ministers ; and these three

On the contrary, inconsistent with Scripture.

¹ Excepting those of St. John to the Seven Churches.

Epistles are written to individual companions of the apostle, not to Churches. . . . Nor is there any intimation whatever that the authority conferred on those individuals was temporary or abnormal, to be speedily succeeded by some more popular or democratic form.¹ I repeat, therefore, that the edifice which has been raised in this country over the ruins of the threefold ministry, through the pretence that that ministry was insufficiently grounded upon Scriptural proofs, so far from being able to produce more satisfactory evidence in its own behalf, either Scriptural or historical, will be found by strict investigation to be literally based upon no evidence at all. This will be demonstrated still more thoroughly as we proceed. It will then be seen that the interpretation which has been put upon the texts and facts of Scripture, upon the one side, is in perfect harmony with history and tradition, whereas on the other side it is at variance with them both.

Recent testimonies of eminent Presbyterians.

In the meantime, before I conclude the present lecture, allow me to offer one remark—or rather to produce one all-sufficient witness—in order to show that in what I have just now said, respecting the baseless and visionary character of the system by which the three-fold ministry has been displaced, I have not spoken rashly, or in the spirit of a partisan, but really and truly in the character which I profess, of a lover of truth and peace. In an early part of this lecture I drew your attention to the fact, that a learned Principal of one of our universities has recently declared,

¹ Sadler's 'Church Doctrine—Bible Truth,' p. 383 sq.

that ‘The existence of episcopacy, as an order distinct from presbyters, ever since the days of the apostles, is simply matter of history, which no candid enquirer can deny.’ I have now to point out, that a learned Principal in another of our universities has recently admitted, with no less candour and love of truth, that when champions of presbyterianism¹ have made their system of lay eldership to rest upon the authority of St. Paul, in 1 Tim. v. 17, they have done what a sound interpretation of the sacred text will not justify.²

More than this: in the able treatise which is devoted to a discussion of that point, the author plainly declares that the distinction between preaching and ruling presbyters, which such champions have professed to draw directly from Scripture, is not Scriptural; is, in short, nothing better than a baseless theory; and that the name of *lay elder*, and the term of *ordination* in connection with his appointment, are indefensible and ought to be abandoned,³ as tending to engender and keep alive incorrect and unscriptural notions respecting the Christian ministry. Such notions, I need scarcely say, have never been accepted by the Anglican, or

¹ Such as the authors of the ‘Second Book of Discipline’ and Dr. Miller of Princeton. See Principal Campbell’s ‘Lay Eldership,’ pp. 8, 38.

² See *ibid.* pp. 2, 20, 32, and comp. ‘Irenicum,’ p. 336 sqq.

³ See *ibid.* pp. 69 sq., 109. He considers, however, that the institution of lay assessors or councillors,

(not presbyters or elders in the New Testament sense) is sufficiently based upon 1 Cor. xii. 28 and Rom. xii. 8; such assessors being the questmen, sidesmen (synodsmen), or testes synodales, and church wardens of the English Church. He rests the admission of laymen into synods upon Acts xv. 23. See pp. 5, 8, 12, 15.

Hopes from
the exten-
sion of such
sentiments.

Eastern, or Roman Churches, and, though sanctioned by Calvin in his writings (but not in his practice¹), have been disallowed by many of the ablest of the foreign Reformed divines. If only we could have, upon both sides, more of the fair and candid spirit, combined with the needful learning and intelligence, which have been shown by the two eminent presbyterian divines to whom I have referred,² I am persuaded that the barriers which now separate Episcopalian and Presbyterians would be speedily removed³ (through the blessing of God upon our earnest endeavours for that end); and a reunion might be effected by building, not upon the treacherous shifting sand of man's imagination,⁴ but upon the solid and immovable rock of divine truth. And is there not a cause for such reapproachment on either side?

¹ See *ibid.* p. 2. Calvin's own consistory at Geneva was not in accordance with his theory, p. 17.

² I am sorry that I cannot extend this remark to *all* that has been written by the former of those divines, especially in some recent numbers of the 'Contemporary Review.' Not only Hooker, but Chillingworth and Stillingfleet, if they were alive, would, I am sure, complain of the treatment they have there received.

³ It is feelingly remarked by Principal Campbell: 'Surely the visible Church is not always to remain in its present divided condition,' p. 66; and his treatise on the

so-called 'Lay Eldership' is evidently written with the charitable design of removing one stumbling-block out of the way of reunion. At p. 67, in speaking of 'the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States' of America, he throws out the valuable and important hint, that 'its admirable constitution combines the advantages of presbytery and episcopacy.'

⁴ 'We have been in a pitiful labyrinth these twelve days about ruling elders; we yet stick into it.' Thus wrote Baillie (a Scotch Commissioner to the Westminster Assembly), from London, under date December 7, 1643; vol. ii. p. 115.

On the one hand, who does not feel the havoc which was made of the Christian ministry, as the apostles instituted it, when men forsook the ground of authoritative example, of Christian precedent, in order to indulge their own temper, to give effect to their own devices? Instead of the well-regulated gradation—which our *à priori* reasoning had led us to anticipate—from the deacon to the presbyter, and from the presbyter to the bishop; instead of this, no gradation was left at all; no bishop at the head, no clerical deacon¹ at the foot, and the presbyter, who alone remained, yet lost his name; while the office was at once bisected and aggrandised, so as to give to each of the two sections more than its due. But though all this must be matter for regret—and for amendment—however we may estimate the conduct which provoked it, yet, on the other hand, justice requires us to pay the deserved meed of praise to those who, notwithstanding their own mistakes upon other points, in one most essential respect hit the blot and supplied the defect of the true system, as it had come to be administered in later times. Ecclesiastical councils, emancipated from all undue interference on the part of the civil power, were again made what they had been from the first at Jerusalem; and the lay brethren were again, not only allowed, but invited and required to recover and to hold their own (and if more than their own, this was owing to the violence of a just recoil from

What both
ministries
have to gain
from mutual
alliance.

¹ Principal Campbell quotes Dr. Claudius Buchanan's 'Christian Researches' as tending to prove that

deacons are an order of the clergy, and ought to come *before* lay representatives, p. 12 sq.

past exclusion) in the administration of all Church affairs.¹ Let these last words be a proof that if we are bold, according to the light and ability which God has given, to challenge and reprove the shortcomings of others, with the view to their amendment and for the common good, we are no less willing and desirous that our own defects should be challenged and reproved, with the same view to correction, for the benefit of the Church which is our common mother, and of the country which we all love.

¹ It should always be borne in mind that the distinguishing characteristic of the Reformed Church of Scotland, as compared with the Reformed Church of England, is *Church government by kirk sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies*; and that this

government is not inconsistent with the threefold ministry, but rather requires the threefold ministry to harmonize and complete it. See the author's Synodal Address for 1870, and the presbyterian testimonies there quoted, p. 26.

LECTURE II.

My former lecture contained a Scriptural and historical survey of the apostolic age, tracing it upwards from the death of St. John in the year 100, to the first infancy of the Church, after our Lord's ascension, at Jerusalem. I now return to my original standing-point, the conclusion of the first century ; and again starting from thence and proceeding downwards in the natural course, I propose to carry on the same investigation into the period which immediately succeeded, that is, into the earliest of the post-Scriptural and post-apostolic times. And if we shall still discover traces everywhere of the same result, which *à priori* reasoning had led us to expect, and which we have seen exhibited in Scripture and in the practice of the apostles, we may, I think, conclude with perfect safety, that we have found the truth of which we were in search.

Enquiry re-commenced
from the end
of first century.

1. In the first place, then, when writers towards the end of the second century, such as Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, and Tertullian, presbyter of Carthage—a European and an African—in disputing with heretics, confront them with the challenge to show, in behalf of their doctrine or discipline,

what the Church had to show in behalf of hers—viz. a regular descent of the bishops of the several dioceses in direct succession from the apostles—when we see this, and when we find that the challenge was never met ; is it possible to conceive an evidence in favour of a prelatical ministry, as primitive and apostolical, more satisfactory—more decisive? Let me offer to you, then, some specimens of this evidence.

And first, from Irenæus ; of whom we know that, having been previously a presbyter of Lyons, he succeeded Pothinus as bishop in A.D. 177 (see Clinton, sub ann.). We also know that in his youth he had been a disciple of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, the disciple of St. John. This venerable author has left us a large and elaborate work against heresies. In that work, book iii. chap. iii., he thus writes :—

‘ In every Church it is in the power of all, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the world ; and *we* are in a position to reckon up those who were by the apostles instituted bishops in the Church and [to demonstrate] the succession of these men to our own times. . . . They (the apostles) were desirous that those persons should be perfect and unblamable in all things, especially as they were leaving them to become their successors, suum ipsorum locum magisterii tradentes, i.e. *delivering up to them their own place of government.*’

But it may be asked, ‘Are we sure that Irenæus, when he wrote thus, did not mean simple ‘presbyters,’ and not

Testimony
of Irenæus.

'bishops,' in the sense in which we now understand this latter term, that is, of persons holding singly a permanent official rank above presbyters? This is a question which may be fairly put, more especially as in the preceding chapter of this third book,¹ and elsewhere, viz. lib. iv. c. xxvi.,² the same writer speaks of those whom he there calls 'presbyters,' in the same way.³ But the answer is clear and certain,⁴ both from what he had said in the first book, and from what he goes on to say immediately after the passage you have heard. In the first book, c. xxiv., he had spoken of

¹ See Harvey's note on that passage. 'While the apostles lived, and exercised control over the Churches which they established, the subordinate spiritual ruler (*ὁ προεστῶς*) of each Church was not distinguished in point of ecclesiastical title from the *presbytery*.'—Vol. ii. p. 7.

² The words of this passage are : 'It is necessary to obey those *presbyters* who are in the Church ; those who possess, as I have shown, succession from the apostles ; who, along with the succession of the *episcopate*, have received the same gift of Truth according to the goodwill of the Father.'

³ 'When we refer them (the heretics) to that tradition which originates from the apostles, and which is preserved by means of the succession of *presbyters* in the

Churches, they object to tradition, saying that they themselves are wiser, not merely than the presbyters, but even than the apostles.' On this use of the name 'presbyters' see Bishop Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 546, who shows that, though bishops were still sometimes (though very rarely) so called, yet an individual bishop was never called 'presbyter,' nor an individual presbyter ever called 'episcopus,' by Irenæus, or any other writer after the apostolic age. *Ibid.*, p. 549. (See also Clinton, 'F. R.' sub ann. A.D. 177.) In pp. 538–543 he exposes the error of Blondel and Salmasius (also of Stillingfleet, p. 311 sq.) in regard to the passage of Eusebius, 'H. E.', v. 4.

⁴ I have no scruple in saying this, notwithstanding the captious remark in 'Irenicum,' p. 306 sq.

Hyginus (bishop of Rome) as ‘holding the ninth¹ place of the episcopal succession from the apostles downwards’ (*ἐπισκοπικῆς διαδοχῆς ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀποστόλων*). In the third book, after the passage just now produced, he continues thus : ‘Inasmuch as it would be tedious in a work such as this, to reckon up *the (episcopal) succession of all the Churches*’ —well—this being so, what does he propose to do? He proposes to give—and he does give—the names of the bishops of Rome,² one by one, from the first foundation of that Church by St. Peter and St. Paul³ (St. Peter as representative of the Jews, and St. Paul of the Gentiles) down to his own time,—that is, to Eleutherius, the twelfth in succession, and then bishop. Now no one, I think, at the present day,⁴ will venture to assert that all, or any of these

¹ The correctness of this calculation, which is questionable, does not affect the relevancy of the passage to the purpose for which it is quoted. St. Cyprian makes the same statement, Ep. lxxiv. ad Pomp., c. ii.

² On the early episcopal succession at Rome as recorded by Irenæus and others, see Bishop Pearson, Minor Works, ii. pp. 266–572, and Lightfoot, pp. 218–222, and p. 166 sq., note. In the time of Pius, the 8th or 9th of the succession (A.D. 127–142), we find the word *cathedra*, ‘chair’ or ‘see’ used as a recognised phrase, indicating a more or less prolonged ex-

istence of the episcopal office. See Lightfoot, p. 220.

³ ‘Those two apostles, the joint-founders of the Church of Rome, left it, however, in charge of Linus when they proceeded, St. Paul to the West, and St. Peter into Pontus.’

—Harvey’s *Irenæus*, vol. ii. p. 10.

⁴ See Bishop Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.’ in answer to Salmasius, p. 550; but Professor Lightfoot, p. 219, considers that the prelatical position of the bishop at Rome was *at first* less marked than at Antioch or Smyrna, and than it soon afterwards became at Rome itself. He calls Clement ‘the presbyter-bishop.’

—Page 222.

were not bishops in the prelatical sense, that is, having presbyters under them *in a lower degree* : although, at the same time, it is to be borne in mind, as tending still further to clear up the point, that the generic name ‘presbyteri’ might be and was still sometimes used in a laxer acceptation,¹ to designate, or include, bishops ; just as the name ‘priest’ is often used in the Old Testament to designate, and in the plural to include, the high priest. We know from an extant letter of Cornelius, the twentieth Roman bishop, A.D. 250, that he had forty-six presbyters under him.² And the same unquestionable distinction between the bishop and his presbyters holds good when Irenæus in the same place goes on to mention next the episcopal succession in the Church of Smyrna, of which he states that Polycarp was appointed bishop by the apostles ; for in the extant epistle of Polycarp he and his presbyters are distinctly specified.³ And once more : the same distinction holds good, where Irenæus mentions, lastly, the episcopal succession in the Church of Ephesus ; of which he tells us that it was founded by St. Paul, and that St. John ‘tarried’ with it so late as the time of Trajan ; virtually producing, therefore, those two apostles as instituting and sanctioning the episcopate of that Church, in which, as we know from Scripture, and as I pointed out fully in my former lecture,⁴ there was a body of

At Smyrna
and Ephesus.

¹ See Sclater, p. 217 sq. ; also above, p. 97, note 3, and below, p. 116.

² See Euseb., vi. 43.

³ See title of the epistle, and capp. v. and vi.

⁴ See above, p. 45.

presbyters even in the time of St. Paul ; a body which Timothy was instructed to enlarge, by ordaining others.

There is one other passage of Irenæus which I cannot refrain from quoting, because, while it bears further testimony to the fact of the episcopal succession having been derived from the apostles, it contains ‘a wholesome doctrine’ which is only too much needed in our own times. In the thirty-third chapter of the fourth book he writes as follows :—

Warning of
Irenæus
against
divisions.

‘The truly spiritual Christian’ (he is alluding to the text of St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 15, *He that is spiritual judgeth all things*) —‘The truly spiritual Christian will judge those who cause divisions ; men who are destitute of the love of God, and who look to their own private advantage rather than to the unity of the Church ; who, for any trifling occasion that may arise, cut and dissever, and, so far as they can, destroy the great and glorious body of Christ ; men who talk of peace while they are waging war, who strain at a gnat but swallow a camel. For *it is not possible that they should effect any improvement sufficient to compensate for the injury which they cause by their schism.*’ Then, after condemning all such persons, he goes on to say : ‘True knowledge consists in these things—in the doctrine of the apostles ; in the primitive system of the Church throughout the world ; in the character, or marks, of the body of Christ, according to *the succession of the bishops, to whom they (the apostles) entrusted the several local or particular Churches which now exist,* and which preserve the traditional rule of faith (i.e. the Creed) in its perfect form, neither detracting from it, nor

adding to it; in the reading of Holy Scripture, unadulterated by apocryphal admixtures, and in sound and careful exposition founded upon safe and reverent interpretation of the sacred text ; and (lastly, he adds), in the gift of charity, which is more precious than knowledge, more glorious than prophecy, and more excellent than all other gifts.'

Such is the guidance which Irenæus gives us for the discovery of the truth, writing before the end of the second century.¹ For my own part I know not where peaceable and humble-minded Christians could find directions more Scriptural, more trustworthy, more suitable to heal our present divisions, and to restore to us the concord which we so sadly need.

I quite admit that the passages which I have quoted, as they occur in Irenæus, are introduced for no other purpose than to confute the teachers of heretical doctrine ; there being at that time no question in regard to Church government, or the right constitution of the Christian ministry ; but it cannot be denied that they also afford, upon this latter point, incidental evidence which is highly valuable in itself, and goes directly to confirm the conclusions to which we are led by a long and orderly array of other proof.

The evidence of Tertullian follows about twenty or twenty-five years after that of Irenæus, at the very beginning of the third century, or, in other words, only one hundred years after St. John's death. In his treatise '*De Præscriptione Hæreti-*

Testimony of
Tertullian.

¹ Professor Lightfoot remarks, p. 218, 'When Irenæus wrote, episcopacy was certainly a venerable institution.'

corum,' that is, 'on the Church's rule for discerning and arguing with heretics,' he thus writes :—

' If there be any heresies which dare to represent themselves as of the apostolic age (in order that they may appear to have sprung from the apostles, because they existed in their time), we can say : Well, then, let them show the original records (*origines*) of their Churches ; let them *unfold the catalogue of their bishops*, so coming down in succession from the beginning, that their first bishop shall have had as his ordainer and predecessor some one of the apostles, or of such apostolic men as continued steadfast in the apostles' fellowship. For in this manner do the apostolical Churches transmit their registers (*fastos*) ; as the Church of Smyrna bears record that Polycarp was placed there by St. John ; as the Church of Rome avouches that Clement was ordained by St. Peter ; and so, too, of the other Churches.¹ They in like manner exhibit those who, as having been appointed to the episcopate by the apostles, have handed down the apostolic doctrine' (c. xxxii. vol. ii. p. 44 sq.). We shall see presently, that there can be no doubt respecting the meaning of the

¹ There is another passage to the same effect in the 'De Præscriptione,' c. xxxvi., which Professor Lightfoot quotes, p. 213, but of which he questions the strict historical accuracy, so far as concerns the use of the term 'apostolic see' in regard to Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth.

But concerning Philippi, see below, p. 162 ; concerning Thessalonica, see the tradition mentioned by Origen on Rom. xvi. 23, and referred to by Lightfoot, p. 213 ; concerning Corinth, see below, p. 161 ; and Lightfoot himself, p. 214.

word ‘episcopate,’ as used by Tertullian. He intended by it simply the first order of the threefold ministry.

The same line of argument was afterwards employed by Optatus, bishop of Milevi, in Numidia, and by St. Augustin, bishop of Hippo, in confuting the Donatists, who had separated from the Church. The former, after tracing the episcopal succession of the Church of Rome from St. Peter downwards to Siricius (the thirty-eighth), who was then bishop (A.D. 385), gives to his opponents this challenge : ‘Do you now produce the origin of your episcopate (*cathedræ*), inasmuch as you claim to yourselves to be the Church.’¹ In like manner Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspa, in Africa, at the beginning of the sixth century, who wrote against the Arian heresy, commends the orthodox faith, ‘which,’ as he writes, ‘through a series of successors in the see (*cathedra*) of Peter the apostle at Rome or at Antioch, in the see of Mark the evangelist at Alexandria, in the see of John the evangelist at Ephesus, in the see of James at Jerusalem, is preached by the bishops of those cities even to the present time.’²

Now it is morally impossible that any men in their senses could have given challenges such as these to the host of heretics throughout the world, unless the facts had been really such as the challengers assumed ; that is, unless *bonâ*

Of Optatus,
St. Augustin,
and Ful-
gentius.

Force of this
evidence.

¹ ‘De Schism. Donat.,’ ii. c. iii.
p. 950. See Bishop Pearson’s Minor Works for the passages of St. Augustin, vol. ii. p. 309; and comp.

‘Irenicum,’ p. 305.
² ‘De Trin.,’ c. i. p. 498. See Bishop Pearson, *ibid.*

fide episcopal, and not merely presbyterian, succession had been actually traceable to the apostles in the Churches thus referred to. Remember, I say nothing of the value of the argument for the purpose to which they applied it, viz. *as a test of the true doctrine*; still less do I insist upon the episcopal succession as the sole and indispensable channel for conveying the grace of sacraments, and other ordinances of the Gospel. Those are points with which I am not now concerned. I simply assert the impossibility of an appeal under such circumstances to facts which had no real existence, to evidence which was not plainly and notoriously true, and also free from all ambiguity in regard to the real character and position of those whose names and succession in an office of pre-eminence were thus produced, or alluded to as notorious and capable of production. And I wish you to observe further, in connection with this line of proof, that it was the common language of Christian antiquity to speak of bishops as successors of the apostles. For instance, it is Jerome himself who says, ‘Apud nos apostolorum locum episcopi tenent.’¹ *With us bishops hold the place of the apostles.* And as it will be impossible to deny that the apostles in the New Testament had a pre-eminence of jurisdiction over all other ministers, so it will follow that they who succeeded them—and succeeded them, as Firmilian, bishop of Cappadocian Cæsarea in Asia, writing A.D. 250, and Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in Africa, writing A.D.

Bishops commonly called
'successors
of the
apostles.'

¹ Epist. ad Marcellum, vol. i. p. 476.

254, both express it, ‘*vicariâ ordinatione*,’ i.e. by an ordination that put them in the apostles’ room—must have had a similar pre-eminence; otherwise it would be a delusion to call them successors.

We have seen that Irenæus felt himself precluded, by the character of his work, from exhibiting more than two or three examples in which the succession of bishops might be traced up to the apostles, viz. Rome, Ephesus, and Smyrna. Happily, however, in the History of Eusebius, which succeeds immediately to the Acts of the Apostles, any deficiency in that respect, which we might otherwise have had occasion to regret, is amply supplied. Eusebius, who was made bishop of Cæsarea, in Palestine, about the beginning of the fourth century (A.D. 306), and who wrote his History, as he tells us, on purpose ‘to record the (episcopal) successions from the apostles, together with the events which had occurred in the Church, and the persons who had presided in the principal dioceses down to his own time,’—Eusebius, I say, has given us the names of the bishops, one by one, not only in the see of Rome, but also in the three other patriarchal sees of Jerusalem, of Antioch, and Alexandria.

I must again repeat, let no one imagine that there can be any room for doubt in regard to the true clerical character and rank of those who composed those several successions. They were from the first what no one denies they were afterwards, prelates or bishops, in the modern sense of this latter

Testimony of
Eusebius to
episcopal
successions.

Meaning of
that term.

¹ See ‘*Patrologia*,’ vol. iii. p. 1168, vol. iv. p. 403; ‘*Irenicum*,’ p. 308.

name, and bishops only; though necessarily at first with fewer subordinate clergy, and with a jurisdiction more limited, and less accurately defined. In the history of Athens we are duly informed respecting the magistrates called archons; that for many years their office continued to be for life, that then it became a decennial, and ultimately an annual one. But we have no information, no hint whatever, in the history of the Church, of an inverse change, or of any change at all, having taken place in the *office* of bishops. We must therefore conclude that no such change occurred, unless we will suppose that the original authors to whom I have referred, when they spoke of those episcopal successions, were consciously intending to delude their readers; and that subsequent historical and chronological writers—writers, some of them at least perfectly impartial, such as Gibbon, or such as Fynes Clinton—who have accepted their testimony to the catalogues in question, allowed themselves to be deluded upon a matter of such importance.

Instances of presbyters advanced to episcopate.

It will serve to put the point upon which I am now insisting in a still stronger light if I can show that there are upon record, during the same period, instances of individuals who had been presbyters, and who were afterwards promoted and ordained to the episcopate as to a higher rank. And instances of this can be shown. For example, we know that Irenæus had been a presbyter of the Church at Lyons before he succeeded Pothinus as its bishop (Euseb. v. c. iv.). Again, we learn from Origen, as quoted by Eusebius (lib. vi.

c. xix.), that Heraclius, who succeeded Demetrius as bishop of Alexandria, had previously been a presbyter of that Church. So, too, Dionysius had been a presbyter of Rome, and Cyprian had been a presbyter of Carthage (see his Life by Pontius, his deacon, c. iii.), before they became bishops. (Euseb. vii. c. vii.; Jerome, 'de Vir. Illustr.', c. lxix.).

It must be confessed that in the earliest times there is some difficulty in proving a distinct ordination of those who were raised from the second to the first order in the ministry ; and opponents of prelacy have not been slow to take advantage of this difficulty, as enabling them to maintain that the distinction between the two orders is not essential, and that, having been introduced merely as a human arrangement, it may be dispensed with or maintained according to circumstances, and simply upon grounds of greater or less expediency. The only Scriptural evidence which bears directly upon the point is derived from the analogy, before referred to, between the Jewish and the Christian ministry ; and this, it cannot be denied, is of great weight. It is certain that the high priest received a separate and distinct consecration from that of the ordinary priests,—a consecration which consisted in being vested with a special dress, in receiving a special unction, and in offering a special sacrifice.¹ Of evidence which is post-Scriptural to the same effect I know of none more conclu-

See Lecture
2²

¹ See Exod. xxviii.-xxx.; Levit. viii. xvi. Selden, 'De Successione in Pontificatum,' lib. ii. capp. vii.-ix. vol. ii. pp. 182-197; Jerome, Epist. lxiv. ad Fabiolam, vol. i. pp. 615-617.

sive¹ than that which is afforded by the earliest canons of the Church ; such as the so-called ‘apostolical canons,’ and the canons of the first œcumenical Council²—to both of which I shall have occasion to refer presently. Meanwhile, in the dearth of records to throw full light upon those early times, we can only suppose that the Church fell into the way of trine ordination as it fell into the way of infant baptism and of the observance of the Lord’s Day ; and that, as no express notice has come down to us of the institution of either of those usages, which, nevertheless, we retain without scruple, so neither need we scruple to retain this usage, which comes to us recommended by at least equal claims of reason and propriety, as well as of prescriptive right.

But to proceed with the question of successorship to the apostles.

2. A second method of proving the point upon which we are engaged—viz. the prelatical character of the earliest episcopate—is to be found in the fact that the ministry to which the apostolical succession appertained was invariably a threefold one, composed of the three orders, bishops,

¹ Bishop Beveridge, in his note upon the Second Apostolical Canon, p. 14, remarks upon the impossibility of the trine ordination having been recognised so universally as we find it was by the earliest Councils, unless it had been instituted by the apostles.

² The fourth canon of that Council

is as follows : ‘It is most fitting that a bishop should be instituted by all the bishops of the province ; but if this be not practicable . . . three at all events must meet together, and when they have received the consent of those who are absent, signified by letter, then let them *perform the ordination.*’

priests, and deacons ; a ministry in which, as a rule,¹ the same individual who rose to the highest, must have passed through the lower orders ; a ministry, in short, the same as that which we found laid down in Scripture in the directions which St. Paul addressed to Timothy as first bishop of the Church in Ephesus, for his own guidance, and for the guidance of those who were to come after him. Let me now request your attention to the evidence of this fact, as we meet with it in writers who come next to the penmen of the New Testament.

The earliest uninspired Christian document is the Epistle of Clement² to the Church at Corinth. It was written from Rome very soon—probably not more than two years—after St. Paul's martyrdom in A.D. 68 ; and, if so, thirty years before the death of St. John. The evidence, therefore, which it affords, belongs properly to the period embraced in my former lecture—the period of the first century—the Scriptural and apostolic age. It is very important to bear this in mind.³ It serves to account for the still unsettled

Testimony of
St. Clement.

¹ But this was not always observed. Deacons were sometimes made bishops, as St. Athanasius of Alexandria ; and even laymen, as Ambrose of Milan, and Nectarius of Constantinople, and Demetrius of Alexandria. See Bingham, book ii. c. x. 5, 7, vol. i. pp. 143, 145 ; Neale, 'Hist. of Alex. Church,' vol. i. p. 12.

² It is probable but not certain

that the Clement who is mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. iv. 3, was the same as the author of the Corinthian Epistle, and bishop of Rome. See Lightfoot, p. 166 sq.

³ Professor Lightfoot does not concur in this early date. He considers the Epistle of Clement to have been 'probably written in the last decade of the first century,' p. 216; in 'the later years of Domitian,

state of the Corinthian Church—much as we have seen it in St. Paul's own Epistles written twelve years before. Whether St. Clement was already become bishop of Rome when he wrote it we cannot certainly tell. If he was—and according to Tertullian, who represents him as having been ordained bishop by St. Peter,¹ he must have been—he doubtless wrote the Epistle in that capacity: at all events, it appears from the first chapter, that he had been formally consulted by the Corinthian Church (as Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, afterwards was by the Church of Philippi²) in its difficulties. In this most primitive document, then, we appear to find a sufficiently distinct recognition of the three orders of the Christian ministry (as the intended normal constitution of that ministry) in the comparison with the Jewish high priest, priests, and Levites—all distinctly named, as holding peculiar and distinct offices in the elder Church (c. xl.³), a comparison repeated afterwards more than once by St. Jerome.⁴ Again: when Clement writes (c. xlii.) that ‘the apostles,

about A.D. 96.’—Page 166.

¹ ‘De Præscrip. Hæret.,’ c. xxxii.

² See his Epistle, c. iii.

³ Following a conjecture of Neander, Dean Milman, ‘Hist. of Christ.,’ vol. iii. p. 259, writes, ‘this passage is rejected as an interpolation by all judicious and impartial scholars’—a statement which, being certainly incorrect, appears to me singularly partial and injudicious. The passage is accepted in ‘Irenicum,’ p. 326, and admitted to

contain ‘a parallel of the Church officers in the Gospel to those under the Law.’ I am glad to find myself supported by Professor Lightfoot, p. 248, in demurring to Dean Milman’s ‘arbitrary criticism.’

⁴ See below in this Lecture. Athanasius calls Hilary the deacon *a Levite*. ‘Hist. Arian.,’ c. xli. vol. i. p. 368. Jerome gives the same name to the Roman deacons. See below, p. 175, note 2.

preaching through countries and cities, appointed the first fruits of their labours—after they had proved them (*δοκιμάσαντες*) by the Spirit—to be overseers and ministers (*ἐπισκόπους καὶ Διακόνους*) of those who should afterwards believe;’ we see just such a germ of the future complete threefold ministry as is found, for instance, in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians, where the apostle himself is still the prelate of the Church.¹

From the Roman bishop, and probable fellow-labourer of St. Paul, St. Clement, we come next to the bishop or metropolitan² of Antioch, St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John. I do not think that any person of competent learning, who has thoroughly studied the controversy respecting the Ignatian Epistles will venture to dispute the genuineness of the seven now generally accepted in their shorter form,³ and still less of the three—to Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to

Testimony
of St.
Ignatius.

¹ See Lightfoot, p. 96.

² In his Epistle to the Romans he calls himself ‘bishop of Syria,’ of which Antioch was the metropolis. See Hammond, ‘Dissert.’ ii. c. vii. sect. 14.

³ The opinion of Dean Milman, who belonged to the sceptical or hypercritical school (see note 3, in last page), is thus expressed: ‘My own opinion is decidedly in favour of the genuineness of these Epistles—the shorter ones, I mean—which are vindicated by Pearson. . . . The object of the writer does not seem to

be to raise the sacerdotal power, but rather to enforce Christian unity.’ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 256. Compare Hammond, ‘Dissert.’ ii. c. xxii. 83; Professor Lightfoot, however, accepts only the Curetonian Syriac; but though he regards ‘the short Greek recension as probably corrupt or spurious,’ he concludes ‘from internal evidence that it can hardly have been later than the middle of the second century;’ and ‘its witness, therefore,’ he adds, ‘is highly valuable.’ See pp. 210 sq., 232, 249.

the Romans—so far as they are preserved in the Syriac version, first published in 1845. The saintly bishop of Antioch was, as I have said, a disciple of St. John, and suffered martyrdom not many years after St. John's death, viz. A.D. 115.¹ Doubtless the temptation is great to dispute the authority of writings which, coming from such a source, must ever be felt, not only to give a strong testimony, but to convey a severe censure against those who have reduced the true ministry of the Church to a republican parity, and I may add, against those also who have exaggerated it into an autocratic supremacy.² But love of the truth will not yield to that temptation; and even so long as there is uncertainty, so long as there is *any ground* of probability that these Epistles may be genuine—much more when the balance of proof must be seen greatly to incline to that conclusion—no fair and candid reasoner will desire that the evidence which they afford should be left out of view. And what, then, is that evidence?³ Of those seven Epistles, which purport to be written by St. Ignatius as a condemned martyr on his way towards Rome, and which, whether written by himself or not, we know⁴ to have been in existence in the second century, there is not one which does not make distinct men-

¹ According to Clinton, 'F. R.', p. 101. Others say A.D. 107, and others A.D. 117.

² See Bishop Pearson's 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 350.

³ Stillingfleet's remarks upon it

may be seen in 'Irenicum,' p. 308 sq.

⁴ From the testimony of Polycarp (Ep. ad Phil., c. xiii.); of Irenæus (lib. v. c. xxviii.); of Origen (Prol. in Cant. Canticor.). See also Euseb. iii. 34.

tion of the threefold ministry, of a bishop, presbyters, and deacons—excepting only the Epistle to the Church of Rome—the Church in reference to which such mention, under the circumstances, would be most likely to be suppressed, and, as matter of evidence, is least required. In three of the Epistles we find the name of the bishop of the Church to which the Epistle is addressed—viz. Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus¹ (with a deacon named Borrus); Damas, bishop of Magnesia (two of whose presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius, and a deacon, Lotio, are also mentioned by name); and Polybius, bishop of Tralles,—particulars not consistent with the notion of forgery.² I propose to give but two specimens³ of the Ignatian evidence out of upwards of thirty distinct testimonies which might be produced. And I shall take the first specimen from one of the three Syriac Epitomes. In the epitomised version of the Epistle to Polycarp, who is denominated in the inscription ‘bishop of Smyrna,’ we read as follows: ‘Be studious of unity, than which nothing is more precious. . . . Cleave to your bishop, that God also may (cleave) to you. I give my life for those who are subject to the bishop, to presbyters, to deacons. With them may my portion be in the presence of

¹ Mentioned also in the Syriac Epitome.

² See Lightfoot, p. 211.

³ For a general view of the other testimonies to be found in the Ignatian Epistles, and of the con-

clusions to which they lead, see Hammond, ‘Diss. Sec.’ capp. xxv. xxvi. Also Appendix to the author’s Synodal Address for 1864, pp. 114–120.

God!'¹ (capp. i. vi.). You will remember that this is quoted, not for the sake of the sentiment, but simply of the testimony—testimony to the fact of the existence of the three orders in that primitive age (the first quarter of the second century), when there was no controversy respecting the form of the ministry to tempt to the fabrication of such representations. The other specimen which I have to give will show not only the same institution of an episcopal ministry, and the same motive for maintaining it—viz. regard for unity—but also that in the opinion of Ignatius it rested upon the sanction of Christ Himself, and that it was already universally received. Thus, then, he writes in his Epistle to the Ephesians, ch. iii.: ‘Since love suffers me not to be silent, I have taken upon me, first of all, to exhort you that ye abide in unity according to the will of God. For as Jesus Christ, our inseparable Life, was [the fulfilment of] His Father's will, so the bishops, settled everywhere to the utmost bounds [of the earth], are by the will of Jesus Christ.’

Similar proof in support of the threefold ministry is to be derived from the narrative of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius, which, if not actually written by the companions of his journey, as it purports to be, is unquestionably a document of primitive times. In that narrative we read: ‘The cities and Churches of Asia had welcomed the holy man through their bishops, and presbyters, and deacons’ (ch. iii.).

¹ On the conclusive character of this evidence in favour of the three-fold ministry, see Cureton's ‘Corpus

Ignatianum,’ Pref. p. xvi. See also Lightfoot, pp. 96, 233 sqq.

From Ignatius—the Asiatic bishop—passing over the apostolic Hermas (brother of Pius, bishop of Rome), who seems, however, to mention the three orders, under the names of ‘bishops, doctors or teachers, and deacons,’ in his third Vision, ch. v.¹—we come next to Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, both African presbyters at the close of the *second*—that is, as I must frequently remind you, the *first* post-apostolic—century. In the former, Clement, we find at least one passage in which the three orders are distinctly named, viz. in his book of ‘Miscellanies,’ where, speaking of the degrees of celestial glory, and comparing them with the dignities of the Church below, he writes: ‘In my opinion the gradations (*προκοπαί*) here in the Church, of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, are imitations of the angelic glory, and of that Economy which, the Scriptures say, awaits those who, following the footsteps of the apostles, have lived in the perfection of righteousness, according to the gospel’ (Strom. vi. c. xiii. vol. ii. p. 793). In another passage, however, of the same work (vii. 1), he mentions only two orders, viz. the presbyterate and diaconate, the former ‘for improvement,’ the latter ‘ministerial.’ In like manner, in his ‘Instructor’ (i. 6), he does not scruple to speak of himself and his fellow-presbyters as ‘Pastors who had rule over (*προηγούμενοι*) the Churches.’ And again, in his ‘Quis Dives,’ &c., (c. xlii.), in the well-known anecdote respecting St. John, the

Hermas.

Testimony
of Clement
of Alex-
andria.

¹ On the testimony of Hermas see Lightfoot, p. 216 sq. He con-

siders ‘the notices in the Shepherd too vague to lead to any result.’

names presbyter and episcopus appear¹ to be used indifferently of the same person. But it will be obvious, that while each of these latter three passages is capable of being interpreted so as to comprehend a threefold division of orders or degrees of ministry,² it is not possible to interpret the first passage so as to reduce the three orders to only two. In short, the fair inference to be drawn from Clement's testimony, taken as a whole, is the same which has already been drawn from that of Irenæus, viz. that the generic name presbyter was still sometimes used in a laxer sense, so as to include the episcopus or overseer of the presbyters. In Tertullian there are three passages at least which bear testimony to the ministry as threefold, viz. in 'De Baptismo,' c. xvii. vol. i. p. 1218; in 'De Fugâ in Persecutione,' c. xi. vol. ii. p. 113; and in 'De Monogamiâ,' c. xi. vol. ii. p. 493.

Testimony of
Tertullian.

¹ I say 'appear,' because Bishop Pearson regards 'presbyter' in that passage as descriptive of age, not of clerical office. 'Vind. Ignat.', vol. ii. p. 551.

² In reference to the first of those three passages, which represents the duty of the presbyterate to be 'to improve,' while that of the diaconate is 'to serve,' the Church, Dr. Lightfoot remarks: 'The functions of the bishop and presbyter are thus regarded as substantially the same in kind, *though different in degree*; while the functions of the diaconate are separate from both.' In re-

ference to the last, he observes: 'Clement, like Irenæus, regards the bishop as a presbyter, *though the converse would not be true*,' p. 227. The passage in the 'Instructor,' iii. 12, upon which Bishop Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 567, has laid so much stress as testifying to the threefold gradation of the ministry, and claiming for it the authority of Scripture, Dr. Lightfoot dismisses as incompetent for that purpose, because it assumes that the names episcopus and presbyter are *not* used synonymously in the New Testament, p. 224, note.

In the first of these passages, not only the distinct existence of the three orders, but the gradation of their power, and the principle upon which it rests, are plainly marked, as may be seen from the words which I proceed to quote : ‘The chief priest, i.e. the bishop, has the right of giving baptism ; after him the presbyters and the deacons ; not, however, without the bishop’s authority, out of regard to the Church’s honour, on the preservation of which depends the preservation of peace.’ Again I must remind you that I am not defending sentiments but ascertaining facts, and with this object I must beg you to observe that in each of the four testimonies of the Alexandrian Clement and of Tertullian to which I have now referred, as specifying the three orders, the mention of them is introduced, not as a matter of doubt or disputation—for there had been no dispute upon the point, nor did any arise till two centuries later—but simply as matter of illustration, or as a statement of acknowledged fact.¹

Slightly later than Clement and Tertullian, but still in the early part of the third century, flourished Origen, another presbyter, and successor of Clement as a teacher in the school of Alexandria. His testimony, frequently² repeated in various parts of his voluminous writings, is precisely the same as that of the other two. In his *Commentary on St.*

Testimony
of Origen.

¹ Professor Lightfoot observes, p. 213, ‘Episcopacy was the only form of government known or remembered in the Church when Ter-

tullian wrote ;’ i.e. within a century after the death of St. John.

² See Bingham, i. p. 55 ; Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.,’ p. 272 sq.

Matthew alone there are four several passages in which the three orders are distinctly enumerated just as we enumerate them at the present day (see vol. iii. pp. 501, 646, 690, 752). In one of those passages we read of persons who prided themselves upon the fact that their fathers or forefathers had been bishops, or priests, or deacons—in which case they must have been contemporary with the apostles or nearly so ;¹ in another it is plainly intimated that the three orders are derived from Scripture.²

Of the
'Apostolical
Canons.'

One more testimony remains to be cited, which sets the coping stone upon this line of proof. I allude to the collection called 'Apostolical Canons,' of which though the date is uncertain, Mosheim, a Presbyterian, admits that they exhibit the discipline received among the Eastern Christians in the second and third centuries ;³ and Bishop Beveridge, who had examined the subject thoroughly, came substantially to the same conclusion.⁴ There seems, therefore, to be no sufficient reason why we should not regard and speak of them in the same way as the Westminster Shorter Catechism speaks of the so-called 'Apostles' Creed,' only substituting the word *discipline* for the word *faith*: 'This collection of canons, though not composed by the apostles,

¹ Vol. iii. p. 690; see Pearson, *ibid.* p. 276.

² Vol. iii. p. 646; see Pearson, *ibid.* pp. 273, 281.

³ See 'Hist. Eccl.', c. ii. 19, p. 50.

⁴ He considered that the collection was formed towards the end of the

second or at the beginning of the third century. See in his 'Synodicon' the note on canon ii. p. 15, explaining the cause of the absence of express evidence respecting ordinations in the early Church. See also Bishop Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 546.

is a brief sum of the Christian discipline, agreeable to the word of God, and anciently received in the Churches of Christ.' The first of those canons is in these words : 'Let a bishop be ordained by two or three bishops, a priest by one bishop, and so likewise a deacon.'¹ And this canon is still observed by all the Churches of the Anglican communion, by all the Churches of the East, and by all the Churches subject to the Church of Rome ; except that they now insist upon the presence of at least three bishops for the consecration of a bishop, according to the fourth canon of the Council of Nicæa, before referred to.²

The testimonies now produced do not descend later than 200 years after our Lord's ascension. No one who is acquainted with early ecclesiastical history, with the writings of the Fathers or the decrees of Councils, will need to be told that from that period³ similar testimonies to the true constitution of the ministry become, in consequence of the greater mass of evidence, infinitely more abundant. For instance, we learn from Eusebius (vi. 43) that a very large synod, which chronologists place in A.D. 251, assembled at Rome to take into consideration the false teaching of

Testimony
from later
times still
more abun-
dant.

¹ See Bruns., 'Canones Apost. et Concil.', p. 1; and Bingham, book ii. ch. xi. 4, vol. i. p. 153 sq.

² See above, p. 108. The canons of that Council distinctly recognise the three orders again and again. See canons 3, 15, 16, 18. It is also to be observed, that the 13th canon speaks of the 'Old Canonical Law,'

with reference, probably, to the 44th of the so-called 'Apostolical Canons.'

³ Concerning the evidence of the Clementine Homilies, which belong, most probably, to the second century, and of the 'Ancient Syriac Documents,' edited by Cureton and Wright, see Lightfoot, p. 209.

Novatus, 'at which sixty bishops, and a much greater number of presbyters and deacons were present.' Such was the Church's experience in Europe. We have similar testimony, to the same effect, about the same time in regard to Africa and Asia; in the seventh Council held under Cyprian at Carthage,¹ on the baptism of heretics, in A.D. 258, at which were assembled upwards of eighty bishops, with presbyters and deacons (*Patrol*, vol. iii. p. 1052); and in the Council held at Antioch, against Paul of Samosata, in A.D. 264 (Euseb. vii. 30). Or if we descend into the following century, to the reign of Constantine, it is calculated, according to Gibbon, that there were then as many as 1800 bishoprics altogether in the East and West; and we know that some 318 bishops,² besides presbyters and deacons, actually came from all parts of the then civilised world—from Spain and Gaul, from Italy and Greece, from Macedonia, from Libya, Egypt and Arabia, from Palestine, and the various provinces of the East—in order to attend that first great General Council to which I just now alluded, which was held at Nicæa in A.D. 325. Even from our own distant island we read of a bishop of London, a bishop of York, and a bishop, priest, and deacon from the diocese of Lincoln, among those who were present at the Council assembled at Arles, in the

Including
evidence
from our
own island.

¹ In one of his letters, epist. lix., he alludes to a Council, held before his time, at which ninety bishops were present. See Lightfoot, p. 222, note.

² Their names, and the names of the sees which they represented, may be seen in Labbe's 'Concilia,' ii. pp. 50–54.

south of France, somewhat earlier, viz. in A.D. 314.¹ In short, the prevalence of that threefold ministry was so universal, so unexceptional, wherever Christianity itself had spread, that the existence of a Church without a bishop, priests, and deacons, would have been thought no less incongruous, no less impossible, than the existence of a Church without the possession of the Scriptures, or without the observance of the Lord's Day. And this uniformity of the ministry is the more remarkable, because in rites and ceremonies (the discussion of which has been sometimes improperly mixed up² with the question of the ministry and of Church government) great differences in different places were unquestionably allowed without any injury to the cause of peace and unity.³ Nor was this all. The heretical bodies also which had separated from the Church—such as the Arians, the Novatians, the Donatists, the Luciferians, the Nestorians, sects which prevailed over different and widely distant parts of Christendom—all retained the same

Heretical
separatists
kept the
same form
of ministry.

¹ See Labbe's 'Concilia,' vol. i. p. 1430. The names of the three bishops were Restitutus, Eborius, and Adelphius. 'There is reason to believe that there were, even at that period, two other bishops in Britain, one of whom was in Wales, and the other in Scotland. In like manner Britain sent three bishops to the Council of Ariminum in A.D. 359.'—Cosmo Innes' *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, p. 46. When

Augustin landed in England, A.D. 596, there were seven British bishops and one archbishop (of St. David's). See 'Theoph. Anglic.', part ii. c. i.

² For instance, in the 'First Book of Discipline,' c. xx., 'Not that we think that one *policy* and one *order* of *ceremonies* can be appointed for all ages, times, and places.'

³ See Firmilian, quoted in 'Irenicum,' p. 323, and Augustin, *ibid.* p. 60, also p. 382.

form of ministry ; which it cannot be supposed that they would have done if they had considered that the Church was in error in this respect, or if there had been any tradition or belief that a different system had been instituted or sanctioned by the apostles.

Pretended exceptions of the Goths, &c.

In making these last remarks I have not forgotten that an exception to this universal uniformity has been thought by some to have been discovered among our own forefathers ; that much has been said about a Culdean church without bishops ; and, moreover, that the Goths have been assigned to us as companions of our singularity in this respect.¹ In such a case, where the multitude of unquestionable examples over all parts of the Christian world was so very great, it might be sufficient to say that as there are *lusus Naturæ* in every department of creation, so in this case the exception only proves the rule. But the truth is, that notwithstanding the learned researches and peremptory conclusions which have been put forth upon the point, there is good and sufficient reason for believing that the supposed exception never really existed.²

No just comparison between the universal prevalence of episcopacy and the western prevalence of popery.

It has also been attempted to cast a slur upon this entire argument by confounding the universal acceptance of an episcopal ministry with the upgrowth and wide extension of popery ; and this representation has been largely and successfully made use of in former times, for the purpose of creating a prejudice against prelacy and in favour of a system

¹ See 'Irenicum,' p. 374 sq.

² See Bishop W. Lloyd's 'Historical Account,' chaps. v.-vii.

of ministerial parity. Nor is this to be wondered at, when it is considered that in order to detect the fallacy there is required some knowledge of early ecclesiastical history, of which the mass of our population, and, I fear it must be added, not a few even of our better educated classes, are sadly ignorant. Of the upgrowth of popery, and of the causes which led to it, I shall have occasion to speak presently ; and then it will be seen that, so far from any natural or necessary connection existing between the two, there has been nothing more fatal to the legitimate authority of bishops than the power of the popes. In the meantime let it be borne in mind that the universal prevalence of a prelatically constituted ministry throughout the entire East of Christendom has been, if possible, still more remarkable than its prevalence in the West ; and that throughout the East (where, be it also remembered, was the first cradle of the Church) the usurpations of popery have been disallowed all along from the beginning—and still are—no less resolutely than since the Reformation they have been rejected by ourselves. There is, in fact, nothing with which travellers in the East, who attend to matters of this kind, are more struck at the present day than the entire absence among all Christian communities, orthodox or heretical, of any semblance of presbyterianism, or of the existence of any other form of ministry than that which we call prelatical. The late well-known missionary Dr. Joseph Wolff, after stating that he himself once held wild and irregular views in Church matters, has left upon record the following testimony :

Testimony
of Eastern
travellers.

‘The very fact that all the Eastern Churches, without one single exception, have bishops, priests, and deacons, and the very fact that a presbyterian Church is not known, is to me a sufficient proof that episcopacy is of divine origin, and that the doctrine of apostolic succession is a Scriptural doctrine.’¹ In an earlier part of the present century the interesting researches of Dr. Claudius Buchanan conveyed similar testimony respecting the Syrian Christians on the coast of Malabar, who appeared incredulous when, as a Scotchman, he told them of a Church, without deacons in holy orders, and without a bishop to superintend the presbyters; while at the same time it appeared that the same body of Christians had placed themselves in an attitude of the staunchest Protestantism against the Church of Rome, whose unscrupulous aggressions they had had only too much reason to resent.²

3. Hitherto it has been my aim in the present Lecture to prove, *first*, that bishops, i.c. individuals holding a permanent position above presbyters, and, strictly speaking, bishops only, were regarded as successors of the apostles by the primitive Christians who lived in the earliest post-apostolic age; and secondly, that during the same age the ministry in which the said individuals occupied the foremost rank was universally a threefold one, consisting of a bishop, presbyters, and deacons. I now proceed, in the third place,

¹ See ‘The Primitive Church in its Episcopacy,’ p. 67; also Dr. Wolff’s ‘Travels to Bokhara,’ vol. i. p. 189.

² See Dr. Buchanan’s ‘Christian Researches in Asia,’ pp. 120-123. .

and still in continuation of the same branch of evidence, to establish the fact that no attempt was made to question the Scriptural authority of the same episcopal or three-fold ministry till the fourth century ; and that no sooner was the attempt made than it was put down and condemned by the universal conscience and witness of the Church.¹

Three authors, all of whom lived within the last quarter of the fourth, and the first quarter of the fifth century, viz. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, the metropolis of Cyprus in the east of the Levant ; Philastrius, bishop of Brescia, in Northern Italy ; and St. Augustin, bishop of Hippo in Western Numidia ; each of these—an Asiatic, a European, and an African—composed a treatise against heresies or false doctrines ; and each has included Aerius in his list of heretics.² This man, who was a presbyter of Sebaste in Lesser Armenia, and had previously been ambitious of a bishopric, but without success, and who was still living when Epiphanius wrote,—this Aerius, unable to digest his mortification and disappointment, took upon himself to broach the opinion (besides being an Arian, and holding other unsound

The first attempt to question the threefold ministry made by Aerius in the fourth century.

¹ Young Stillingfleet argues, that Aerius was condemned because he denied the lawfulness of episcopacy and for his separation ; otherwise Jerome must have been condemned too. See ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 276, 404. It is true that Jerome’s error was simply theoretical. He did not deny the right of bishops to their pre-eminence (quite the contrary), and what

he has denied, more or less, in two passages—the Scriptural and apostolic origin of the right—he has asserted in many more. See below, in this Lecture.

² Epiphanius, ‘Hær.,’ lxxv. vol. i. pp. 904–912 ; Philastrius, ‘De Hæresibus Liber,’ c. exxii. p. 70 ; St. Augustin, ‘De Hær.,’ c. liii. vol. viii. p. 55.

doctrines) that there ought to be no difference between a bishop and a presbyter. The arguments which he used were all drawn from Scripture, and appear to have been precisely similar to those which it was found convenient to have recourse to, in order to justify a foregone conclusion, in the later stage of the Continental Reformation, and with which in this country we have become familiar, since the days of Andrew Melville, and still more of Alexander Henderson. For instance, he referred to Philippians i. 1, and to 1 Timothy i. 14, without troubling himself (so far as appears) to compare this latter text with 2 Timothy i. 6.¹ But the true interpretation of Scripture upon such a point, however speciously attacked, was not to be so easily overthrown in that early age ; being attested, as it then was, by a uniform tradition, and by the experience of universal Christendom. Consequently the teaching of Aerius (notwithstanding the support it might have derived from the wild statement which St. Jerome put forth not long after, and to which I shall presently refer at length)—this teaching, I say, this discovery of Aerius, appears to have become extinct with his own death ; and no more is heard of it until it was revived by the supposed ‘necessity’ of untoward circumstances which embarrassed, for the most part, the legitimate progress and development of the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

Meanwhile, we have now to turn our attention to a cor-

¹ See Epiphanius, *ibid.*, and Bishop Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.’ pp. 326, 565 sq., 571.

ruption of the truth the very opposite of that which was broached by Aerius.

Corruption
of the truth
in the oppo-
site extreme.

I remarked in my former lecture, that an indication of the probable design of a uniform ministry, and of our being able to discover it, is to be found in the fact that elements of identity underlie the diversities of system which actually exist, and that the diversities themselves can all be traced historically to one and the same common origin.

We have now arrived at that stage of our enquiry when the grounds of that remark are to be made good. And this will form the fourth and last stage of investigation under that second main head of our general argument with which we are now engaged.

4. It has been shown, then, I think conclusively, that the apostles formed a distinct body, having prelatical authority, each in his own person ; that they severally made provision for a successorship to themselves in all the ordinary functions of their prelatical office ; and that their successors from the first were, and have been ever since, known by the name of bishops, having presbyters and deacons under them, as necessary to complete the clerical ministry.

We have also seen, that in the fourth century an attempt was made by Aerius to call in question the Scriptural authority of that successorship, and to prove that the apostles in fact had no successors, and that no higher order than that of presbyters ought to be maintained in the Church. It has been seen, moreover, that the time was not yet ripe for any such attempt. More than a thousand years were to pass

before it could be renewed ; and then it would be made, and would partially succeed as a reaction from an attempt which, as I have said, was of the very opposite kind, and which also appeared for the first time in the fourth century.

Upgrowth of
popery.

I allude to the pretensions in behalf of the see of Rome, when there began to be advanced—though in a way scarcely perceptible, and certainly with no intention of producing the extreme results which eventually flowed from them—pretensions whereby, over and above the successorship of bishops to the apostles, which Aerius denied, there was asserted a special successorship to one apostle, viz. St. Peter, which was to give to one bishop—the bishop of Rome—an official rank and authority superior to and distinct from the rank and authority of all the rest ; and thus the threefold ministry, which Aerius would have reduced to two orders, was virtually increased to four. Happily, not only the teaching of Scripture,¹ but the testimony of the Church's history for the first 300 years and upwards² is no less conclusive against the exorbitant claims of the single bishop of Rome, than it is against the opposite claims of the disappointed presbyter of Sebaste. I cannot say, more conclusive ; on the contrary, I must confess, that full as much apparent testimony is to be derived from both these sources—from Scripture, and from antiquity—in favour of the papal excess, as is to be derived from them in favour of the presbyterian defect ; for such is the nature of these two extremes in comparison with the

¹ See a tract entitled 'The Episcopate,' by the Rev. H. Dodds.

printed in the Report of the Norwich Church Congress, 1865 ; and

² See the author's Address,

Perth Lecture, 1854, pp. 17-22.

true system of the Church's ministry. We have no difficulty in tracing the steps which gradually led up to the gigantic structure of the papal supremacy. The use of St. Peter's name, not without some semblance of a primacy among the apostles being assigned to him in Scripture ; the unquestionable primacy of Rome itself as *princeps urbium* in the civilised world ; the learning, sanctity, and fidelity of some of its first bishops ; the value of a centre to look to and to rally round during the early childhood of the Church, in days of persecution or in days of heresy, and when—the Church being still confined within one empire, and speaking, for the most part, one language—the recognition of such a centre involved none of those practical inconveniences which render it both undesirable and impracticable at the present day: and again, at a later period, when the irruption of barbarians from all sides had broken up the order of Christian society throughout Europe, the obvious advantage of guidance and of authority, the best and most powerful that could be had, in dealing with the new elements, so as to bring them, as far as might be, under a control which, in proportion as it was uniformly systematised, would be more widely felt :—these, and such as these, were the causes which led men to acquiesce in, or promote—too often through the use of force or fraud¹—a development of the

Causes
which led
to papal
supremacy.

¹ 'History deposed unhesitatingly that Rome rose to the eminence she occupied in the thirteenth century, when at her zenith . . . most un-

righteously, as concerns the Church—the whole Church I mean—by *fraud and force*; by the weapon of the weak and the weapon of the

threefold ministry, which practically destroyed its divine symmetry, and introduced a power utterly inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture, and with the testimony and example of the Church during the apostolic and post-apostolic age. And how was this power to be maintained? It was to be maintained partly by denying, partly by undermining, the legitimate authority of the highest order of the threefold ministry—that is, of the bishops, as each and all equally¹ successors of the apostles; and then by obtruding the pope alone into their place. And this was done.² Contrary to the prevailing sentiment of the primitive Church, first, the schoolmen, in the pope's interest, invented a distinction whereby, though they allowed bishops to be superior to presbyters in power and jurisdiction, they made them to be

strong alternately put into her hand, and employed by her as legitimate for the spread of her power, to the dismemberment and destruction of the Church at large; the most striking specimens of each kind being the *Pseudo-Decretals*, including of course the Pseudo-donation, and the *Crusades*.—Ffoulkes' *Letter to Archbishop Manning*.

¹ See St. Jerome, 'Epist. ad Evang.,' i.: 'Ubiunque fuerit Episcopus, sive Romæ, sive Eugubii, sive Constantinopoli, sive Rheydi, sive Alexandriæ, sive Tanis, ejusdem meriti, ejusdem est et sacerdotii.'—Vol. i. p. 1194.

² See the author's 'Discourse on

Scottish Reform.,' 2nd ed., pp. 16 sq., 93–97. It is strange that a Church historian like Gieseler, vol. i. p. 89, should not have understood the real drift of 'admissions' made by the Roman canonists and schoolmen to the effect that bishops and presbyters are of one order. See also Stillingfleet's 'Iren.,' pp. 273, 300, and Professor Lightfoot, p. 228: 'The substantial identity of order (of bishops and presbyters) was maintained even by popes and councils.' Yes, by popes, and by councils so far as they were overruled by popes. But see the next note.

both of one and the same order.¹ In this they were followed by the Jesuits ;² and to the present day, though the Church of Rome reckons altogether seven orders in the ministry—four of them being inferior, and only semi-clerical—the episcopal order is not included,³ but is regarded as merged in that of presbyters, while the pope sits alone, *extraordinary*, and supreme above them all !

This is what is meant by papal supremacy. This is what the Eastern patriarchs, in the encyclical letter which they addressed to the present pope in complaint of his aggression upon their jurisdiction twenty years ago, called—and justly called—‘the great heresy of modern times, as Arianism was the great heresy in the earlier ages’ (p. 9). Acting upon the new notion of the schoolmen, and calculating that whatever tended to depress the episcopate would elevate themselves, the popes did not scruple to give dispensations whereby presbyters were authorised, on occasions,

Supremacy
of the pope
denounced
by Eastern
patriarchs.

¹ See Bishop Pearson’s Minor Works, i. p. 275; Bingham, i. pp. 52, 270, and ix. p. 245. At the same time, it is not to be forgotten that the Council of Trent, mainly through the influence of the Spanish bishops (see Father Paul’s History, pp. 552 sqq., 686), pronounced anathema against any ‘who shall say that there is not in the Catholic Church a hierarchy, instituted by divine appointment, which consists of bishops, priests, and deacons.’ See below, p. 138.

² Some of our earlier divines, e.g.

Hooker, Field, Mason, Mede, Usher, have followed the scholastic distinction, speaking of only *two orders*, but *three degrees*. Compare Bishop Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.’, p. 279. But Bishop Andrewes, ‘Opusc. Posth.’, p. 183, has shown that the pretended distinction of order and degree is not founded on Scripture or the Fathers. And so also Bingham, *ut supra*.

³ The seven Roman orders are : presbyter, deacon, subdeacon ;—acolyte, exorcist, reader, doorkeeper.

Policy of the
pope to
impair the
authority of
bishops.

to perform episcopal acts. And worse than this: not only did they encourage throughout Christendom the institution of rich and powerful monastic bodies, which they set free from episcopal jurisdiction by making their establishments extra-diocesan; but they took upon themselves to appoint legates or vicars, by whom their own supreme authority was to be represented and enforced in other countries beyond Italy; an abuse which our great dramatic poet has exposed in the accusation against Cardinal Wolsey, which he puts into the mouth of the Earl of Surrey:—

You wrought to be a legate, by which power
You maimed the jurisdiction of all bishops.

King Henry VIII. Act iii. Sc. 2.

In this manner, when episcopacy had been depreciated to serve the interests of the papacy,¹ and when its rights and position as a distinct order in the ministry had become obscured and confounded with those of the presbyterate, the way was prepared for the downward course which fol-

¹ See Pearson's M. W., i. p. 274 (and Churton's Pref., p. lviii.): 'Nothing is more certain than that all diminution of the rights of episcopacy had its source in the papal usurpation.' See also *ibid.* pp. 286, 434. Bishop Taylor, vi. p. 809: 'I shall say one thing more, which is indeed a great truth, that the diminution of episcopacy was first introduced by popery; and the popes of Rome, by communicating to abbots and

other mere priests special graces to exercise some essential offices of episcopacy, have made this sacred order cheap, and *apt to be invaded.*' Archbishop Bramhall, i. p. 252: 'Though the popes do not abolish the order of bishops, or episcopacy, in the abstract, yet they limit the power of bishops in the concrete at their pleasure, by exemptions and reservations.'

lowed naturally upon the overthrow of the papal usurpation ; a downward course which, in this and other Protestant countries, has been going on from the time of the Reformation to the present day. And, much as there is to condemn in the avowed doctrine and in many of the practices of the Church of Rome, I cannot but consider that a less amount of injury to the cause of Christianity, and to the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world, has arisen from these than from the usurped dominion of the same Church ; which, through the opposition which it roused, has given occasion, more or less directly, to those divisions by which our modern Christendom is disturbed and rent.

The various steps of the downward course just now referred to, are to be traced no less easily than the steps of the ascent which I before described. When the people, exasperated into lawlessness by a long period of great and grievous provocation, shook off the power of the pope, and assumed it to themselves, it was not unnatural for them to suppose that as the pope had often allowed presbyters to act as bishops, and had reduced bishops into little more than presbyters, through their subjection to himself, they (the people) might do the same ; they also, with at least equal propriety, might treat their own national bishops as presbyters, and their presbyters as bishops. And this they did : they turned the acts of the papacy against itself.¹ Hence it

¹ On 'The Defects of the Reformation as due originally to Excesses of Popery' see the author's 'Disc. on Scottish Reform.,' p. 16, and Append. ch. v.

Injurious effect of this policy upon the Scotch and foreign Reformers.

Gradual departure from the true system of the ministry.

Upgrowth of
Presbytery.

is that, according to the just remark of Charles Leslie, ‘Whosoever would write the true history of presbyterianism must begin at Rome, and not at Geneva.’¹ First came the system of Knox (1560) with the shadow of episcopacy in the persons of superintendents, but without the laying on of hands,—a system professedly founded upon the principle which, however familiar to us now, had been till then unheard of, that the ministry of the Church admits of variation.² Next came the system of Andrew Melville (1580), with laying on of hands restored,³ but with no superintendents to lay them on, and with the assertion of simple equality in the power and authority of all pastors, or preaching presbyters, and with the novel introduction of lay elders (otherwise called ruling presbyters) as a permanent ‘spiritual function,’ to share with the pastors the government of the Church ; the diaconate being also permanently converted into a lay office :⁴ a system founded upon the opposite principle of setting a limit permissible to variety in the constitution of the ministry, at least so far as to exclude⁵ even the shadow

¹ Leslie’s Works, vol. vii. p. 127.

² ‘We do not think that any policy can be appointed for all ages, times, and places.’—*Scotch Confession of Faith*, 1560, c. xx.

³ Melville himself, like Calvin, never, I believe, received even presbyterian ordination.

⁴ In the first ‘Book of Discipline’ provision had been made (c. x.)

for election of laymen as elders and deacons ; but neither office was to be permanent. Both officers were to be elected *annually*.

⁵ Grub, ‘Eccles. Hist.,’ ii. 225, goes further. He considers that the system laid down in the *second Book of Discipline*, is there held to be ‘of perpetual authority, . . . and therefore *unalterable under any circumstances whatever*.’ But he

of episcopacy before allowed. Next followed the Glasgow Assembly of 1638, which formally renounced and condemned episcopacy, ‘as having no warrant nor fundament in the Word of God ;’ and shortly after, the Westminster Assembly (1643–47), which, having first taken a solemn pledge in the house of God to do their utmost to extirpate prelacy, proceeded to examine the Word of God, and there found what for fifteen centuries had never been found there—viz. that a ministerial platform of coequal clerical pastors, of semi-lay, ruling presbyters, and lay deacons, is alone of Divine appointment, and, as such, of perpetual obligation ; to which they added, as at least ‘lawful and agreeable to the Word of God,’ graduated government by congregational assemblies (otherwise called kirk sessions), classical assemblies, or presbyteries, synodical assemblies, and general assemblies ; a system which bore upon its front its own condemnation, because, while it claimed, for the most part, to be of universal obligation, it professed to be framed ‘in a method of their own ;’—for human originality in the things of God is equivalent to untruth,¹ according to the favourite but much-abused maxim² of the Puritans themselves, which on this occasion they appear to have forgotten. Then came, in open antagonism to the last system, the system of Independency.

adds, ‘It cannot, however, be said that the *divine right* of the presbyterian system was even now distinctly set forth.’ On the exclusion of episcopacy see *ibid.* pp. 212, 219.

¹ See ‘Acts of General Assembly,’ p. 114.

² See ‘Confession of Faith,’ 1560, c. xviii., and comp. author’s ‘Disc. on Scottish Reform.,’ Appendix, c. iii.

Irvingism.

dency, by which each congregation was to form in itself a complete Church. Such were the retrogressive, downward steps of the great reaction from the upward development and ascendancy of popery ; till at last Quakerism was reached, without any ministry at all, and with women permitted, if not preferred, to preach ! And now we have had, within the last quarter of a century, symptoms of a counter-reaction. Not only has the Free Church endeavoured to restore the diaconate, which (though pronounced to be of perpetual obligation) had become practically obsolete, to its original place in the presbyterian system ; but the sect of the Irvingites, not content to accept the threefold ministry in its Catholic form, have added, by an invention of their own, a fourth order, whom, in repudiation of the feeling of reverence which influenced the primitive Christians,¹ they do not scruple to call ‘apostles.’

Consistent position of the Church of England.

In striking contrast with all this change and inconsistency—with all that excess on the part of Popery, and with all this defect on the part of an heterogeneous and discordant Protestantism—stands out the simple position of the Church of England ; which—when it had shaken off the papal usurpation, under which it had groaned, more or less (though not without continual protests), for three centuries—it accepted and announced, not, however, as something new and original, but as old and traditional ; which it announced, I say, at the commencement of the Reformation,² and from

¹ See Theodoret in Ep. i. ad Timoth., c. iii. vol. iii. p. 652.

² It must be admitted, however, that in the minds of many of the

which, up to the present time, it has never deviated so much as a hair's breadth—a proof at once of consistency and truth! The announcement was made in these words, which form the first sentence of the preface of our Ordination Services :—

‘It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and antient authors, that from the apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church —bishops, priests, and deacons.’

Controversy may beat against these words, like waves against a rock, but it will never move them. And anyone who has studied the aberrations of the human mind in the spirit of a sound philosophy will recognise, I think, a further confirmation of the historical argument which has now been traced, in the fact that the Church, which has certainly produced the greatest and most learned of the Reformed divines, has also given the most consistent witness to the truth ; standing now, as it has ever stood, equally removed from both those extremes, whereby the true proportions of the organisation of the Christian ministry have been exceeded or curtailed.

But the evidence is to be extended further yet. I have produced the uniform testimony of the Churches of the An-

Anglican reformers, as individuals, and especially of Archbishop Cranmer, there was much confusion and unsoundness upon the point, arising out of the same causes which

had produced similar results in the views of Knox and his associates. See ‘Irenicum,’ pp. 392 sq.
404.

Its agreement with the Churches of Russia and of the East.

glican communion—English, Irish, Scotch, American, Colonial. The testimony of all the Eastern Churches and of the Church of Russia (which, be it remembered, are as much opposed to popery as Western Protestants are) is to the same effect, as may be seen from the following words of the larger Catechism of the Russian Church: ‘The necessary degrees of order in the Church are three, viz. those of bishops, priests, and deacons.’¹ But, strong and valuable as both those testimonies are (representing, as they do, the uniform conclusion of the two most numerous communities of Christians in the world, next to the Roman Catholics), I am not sure that the confessions which have come from the two extremes themselves are not even still more conclusive. On the one hand, it was decreed in the Council of Trent, mainly through the influence of the Spanish and French bishops, and greatly against the will of the Ultramontane party,² as follows:—

‘If anyone shall say that there is not in the Catholic Church a hierarchy, instituted by divine appointment, which consists of bishops, priests, and deacons, let him be *anathema*’ (Session xxiii. c. vi.).

Opinion of Calvin.

And to this, on the other hand, we have the corresponding³ anathema of Calvin himself. His words are these:—

¹ Page 96. See also the ‘Confession of Dositheus,’ Patriarch of Jerusalem, stating the faith of the Oriental Church in 1672; Kimmel’s ‘Monumenta,’ vol. i. p. 437 sq.

² See above, p. 131, note, and the History of Father Paul there referred to.

³ But Calvin’s ‘anathema’ was prior to that of Trent.

'If they (the Romanists) would *show* us an hierarchy in which the pre-eminence of bishops should be placed upon such a footing as that they would not refuse to be subject unto Christ and to depend upon Him as their only head'—in allusion to the false headship of the bishop of Rome, as episcopus episcoporum—'and in which they would so cultivate a mutual brotherhood, as to acknowledge no other bond of union than the truth of God ; then, indeed, if there be any who could not reverence such an hierarchy, and pay it entire obedience, they would be worthy, I confess, *of every possible anathema* (*nullo non anathemate*).'¹

Such, in principle, is the hierarchy which we now *show*, and which the Church of England *shows*. But the divines of the Westminster Assembly swore to extirpate what the learning and the judgment of Calvin would not suffer him to condemn, nay, even obliged him to anathematise those who should condemn and disallow it.

In like manner, it was Luther himself, who, in the last work which he wrote, and published in 1545, only a year before his death, gave this testimony :—

'Let the bishops cease to persecute and blaspheme the Gospel ; let them provide for the Churches true teachers ; let them put away forms of worship which are impious and idolatrous, and restore such as are pure and true : and then the duty which *we owe to them* shall be fully paid ; then will

' De Necessitate Reform. Ec- ber 1554, 'Epist. et Resp.', pp. cles.,' Op., viii. 60. See also his 187-191.
letter to the king of Poland, Decem-

we acknowledge them as our fathers indeed ; then will we gladly submit ourselves to their authority, which *we see to be thoroughly fortified by the word of God* (*Verbo Dei communitam*).¹

The members of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 could *not see* this : the divines of the Westminster Assembly could *not see* it ; they saw the reverse : but the Father of Protestantism could see it, and all the more clearly the nearer he approached to his latter end.

I have now gone through what I considered to be necessary in order to exhibit—in as clear and, at the same time, in as succinct a manner as I could—the argument upon the question before us, so far as it is to be drawn from a strict investigation, first of the Scriptural, and then of the historical evidence. But there is one thing which is still wanting in order to complete this portion of the subject, viz. to notice the principal objections which have been raised, more or less, against such a representation of the said evidence as that which has been now given ; and the consideration of these will occupy the remainder of the present lecture.

Objections
to be now
considered.

1. Objection.
That Holy
Scripture
would have
been more
explicit if
one form of
ministry had
been obliga-
tory.

i. First, then, the objection with which we are most familiar arises out of the form in which that portion of the historical proof which we derive from Scripture is communicated to us. It is felt that this might have been made far

¹ Luth. Op., viii. 591 sq.; Usher, vii. p. 69,) speaks to the same effect. See further testimonies below, in Lect. iii.

'Irenicum,' p. 405 sq.; and by

more direct and definite than we see it is, and hence it is inferred that no obligation can lie upon us to accept as matter of duty what is only to be proved with difficulty, if proved at all.¹ The case is put in the ordinary popular way by Sir Walter Scott in the ‘Legend of Montrose,’ where the author is describing in his own person the two opposing parties—‘the Prelatists and Presbyterians of the more violent kind’—in the days of Charles I.: ‘It was in vain remarked to these zealots that had the Author of our holy religion considered any peculiar form of Church government as essential to salvation it would have been revealed with the same precision as under the Old Testament dispensation’ (chap. i. p. 9). In these words, if we take them to represent the objection referred to as made in the present day, there is the ordinary twofold fallacy. First, there is what logicians call ‘*ignoratio elenchi*,’ or misstatement of the question. Even in the time of the Covenant, I doubt whether the most violent zealot would have said—and certainly none of us say at the present day—that a particular form of Church ‘is essential to salvation.’ But what some of us do say—and maintain—is this: that a particular form of Church government is (upon other grounds, and not least for the sake of unity) expedient, if not necessary, for the good order, and welfare, and extension of the Church—

Fallacy of
this objec-
tion.

¹ Comp. Ezek. xx. 49, from whence it would seem that a similar objection was raised against the warnings of the old prophets: ‘If

he had really a message from God which was designed to guide us, would it be delivered in such dark and ambiguous terms?’

all which being matters of concern to Christ Himself, must be also matters of concern to all good Christians. And then the argument itself—that if one particular form of Church government had been essential in the Christian Church it would have been revealed with the same precision as in the Jewish—this argument, I say, is equally fallacious. For what right had we to entertain any such expectation, when we know that in the parallel case of the observance of the Lord's Day no precise revelation is to be found upon the point? No; rather it would be fair and reasonable to argue that a threefold ministry having been already revealed and made obligatory under the Law—just as a weekly Sabbath had been revealed and made obligatory—there was no further occasion for an express command, and that the absence of such renewed command only leaves us to infer equally in both cases that, *mutatis mutandis*, the original order is still to be observed.¹

Other points
of duty on
which Holy
Scripture is
not more
explicit.

But it may be well to state our answer to this popular objection a little more fully. The truth, then, is, that so far from being entitled to look for a precise, explicit revelation, *totidem verbis*, upon a point like this—the right constitution of the Christian ministry—the evidence which we have regarding it is exactly of the same kind (viz. circumstantial rather than direct) which it has pleased God to give us in regard to other practical matters of scarcely, if at all, less importance.² I have already mentioned the case of

¹ See the author's Synodal Address for 1866, p. 18, note.

² See Hammond's Works, vol. i. p. 398 sq.; vol. iv. p. 742.

the observance of the Christian Sabbath. There is also the case of infant baptism. But that which is the strongest perhaps of all, and certainly the most important, is the case of the canon of the New Testament.¹ Surely nothing can be more essential than that we should be left in no uncertainty upon a matter on which the whole system of Christianity entirely depends. And yet no one can pretend that the canon of Scripture, and especially of the New Testament Scripture, has been revealed to us in any way whatever. No one can point to any authoritative declaration emanating from an apostle, or council of apostles, to give it the sanction which the objection we are considering assumes to be necessary. No one can say that it has been ascertained otherwise than by traditional usage and historical research,—usage and research which are doubtless sufficiently conclusive; but certainly not more conclusive than the usage and research precisely similar which enable us to ascertain the true ministry of the Church; while, in regard to this latter, we may also gather evidence clear and sufficient (not in my opinion only but in the opinion of great divines, such as Hooker²) to the same effect from Revelation itself. Moreover, it must be admitted that upon grounds far less sufficient, far less conclusive, we receive without question the most important facts and deductions of secular history. Nor can I omit to remark, as a further justification of the

Canon of
Scripture

¹ See above, Lect. i. p. 5.

Scripture,' &c. &c. I might have

² 'Ecc. Pol.', book v. c. lxxviii.

added, in the opinion of Luther also.

§ 9. 'It clearly appeareth by Holy

See above, p. 140.

dealing of God's providence with us in these respects, that there is a manifest advantage in circumstantial evidence over that which is direct in such a case ; because it leaves far less room for suspicion of forgery, which might be raised by interested persons against a single text, containing a direct and express command.

If, notwithstanding all that has now been said, it be still objected that there are few persons competent or inclined to conduct with the requisite care an investigation such as circumstantial evidence confessedly demands, and such as we admit to be necessary in the present case ; then we reply (as was indicated in my former lecture), that there was a time, during the first ages of the Church, when no such investigation was called for ; because, when one and the same threefold ministry was everywhere in existence, no question could be raised concerning it ; or, if raised, it would, as in the instance of Aerius, be immediately set at rest by the unanimous voice of the universal Church. And if occasion has since been given for the question, and no unanimous voice is now heard to settle it ; then we further reply, that this state of things is due to misgovernment on one side, and to insubordination on the other ; and while it is plain that the goodness of God cannot fairly be made responsible for the consequences of human faults, it is equally obvious that the faults themselves are punished most appropriately by the increased doubts and difficulties which such misconduct has tended to create.

But after all (to sift this objection still more thoroughly),

what was there that we could reasonably expect from Scripture in regard either to the record of fact, or delivery of precept, which we have not received? If men ask us to show them a full-blown diocesan system—with a threefold ministry—in every place where the Gospel was first preached, during Scriptural times, they ask what implies a misconception of the circumstances of the case; and the Scripture itself has taught us to protest against any such demand. There is abundant evidence that the Church was everywhere to be built up by degrees, and only out of materials thoroughly and cautiously prepared.¹ In no place, so far as we read, did the apostles ordain presbyters upon a first visit; though it is probable this may have been done at Ephesus, where St. Paul's first visit extended to the unusual period of three years. In default of men regularly trained and willing to devote themselves to the clerical profession, as now they do, from early manhood, there was at first large employment of extraordinary and miraculously gifted ministrations of which we have now no experience. St. Paul himself was not formally ordained as apostle of the Gentiles (Acts xiii. 1, A.D. 45) till ten years after his miraculous conversion and primary call on the way to Damascus (Acts ix. A.D. 34). At Ephesus, after the Church had existed there about twelve years, Timothy was warned not to ordain 'a novice' (1 Tim. iii. 6). Again, the apostles, when persecuted in one city, would have to break off their missionary

A mistake
to suppose
the teaching
of Scripture
insufficient.

¹ See above, Lect. i. p. 22. Also 1864, p. 26 sq., and for 1866, p. the author's Synodal Address for 25.

work, and (as their divine Master had enjoined) flee to another. In the matter of precept, we could scarcely look for more, under such circumstances, than general injunctions to maintain unity and uniformity, to practice subordination, and to show all due respect and obedience to constituted authorities—and of such injunctions there is no lack. Nor, in regard to historical fact, can we reasonably complain that we have been left without the needful guidance, so long as we can find, during Scriptural times, what we have discovered in the Church of Jerusalem, in the Church of Ephesus, in the six other Churches of Lydian Asia, in the Church of Crete—out of Scripture itself; and out of uninspired but trustworthy authorities, in the Church of Rome, in the Church of Antioch, in the Church of Alexandria, not to mention others¹—still during Scriptural times : so long as we can find *thus early* such and so many instances of an episcopal or threefold ministry ; and *can find no instance whatever, either in or out of Scripture, of the Papal system on the one hand, or the Presbyterian system on the other*, during the same primitive period ; so long as this is so, to ask for more evidence, is surely of a piece with the conduct of the unbelieving Jews, who, though Christ had wrought so many miracles before their eyes, still professed themselves dissatisfied, still continued to ask for some further sign.

2. A second objection, which may be disposed of in a few words, has been raised upon the remark that the most

¹ See above, Lect. i. p. 72 sq.

important arrangements in the organisation of the Church—for instance, the appointment of ‘the seven’ whom we suppose to be the first deacons (*Acts vi.*)—appear to have arisen out of circumstances purely incidental, and not from forethought or design. Hence it has been argued¹ that such arrangements must be still subject to the control of circumstances, so as to be variable at our own discretion, and can have no legitimate claim to be received as of perpetual obligation. But there seems to be no good reason why God should not employ the incidents in the history of the Church as He employs all other incidents, in order to accomplish His own purposes in His own good time. This was the ground that was taken by more than one of the Westminster divines in discussing the very point referred to as an example, viz. the Institution of the Diaconate. Its perpetuity was insisted on, and the very same objection in regard to it was overruled by Mr. Vines, because, as he argued, ‘that which is occasional in the rise, yet may be perpetual in the use;’ and again by Mr. Rutherford, who pleaded that, ‘though the occasion was the murmuring, &c., yet the motivum was the good of the Church to the end of the world; as the occasion of St. John’s Gospel was [the heresies of] Ebion and Cerinthus, but the motivum was the good of the Church for ever.’² Moreover we cannot be

Apparently
accidental
character of
primary or-
ganisation.

¹ See Dr. Caird’s Essay in ‘Good Words,’ July 1863.

² See Lightfoot’s Journal, pp. 87, 89. Mr. Rutherford also referred

to ‘the Epistle to Philemon, and the case of Zelophehad,’ as additional examples to the same effect. St. Luke’s Gospel is another case in point.

quite certain that the appointment of the seven did really form the first institution of the diaconate. Mosheim and others are decidedly of opinion that it did not,¹ and that deacons had been previously instituted and employed in the Church; although we find no mention of the fact in the Acts, as we also find no mention there of the institution of presbyters at Jerusalem. Again, St. Chrysostom (*in loc.*) has raised a doubt whether the seven were deacons at all in the clerical sense; or rather, he considers it very manifest that they were neither deacons nor presbyters, but were appointed only for the particular purpose specified in the history. So that of this objection it may be said:—

Nil agit exemplum item quod lite resolvit.

And, after all, it is to be borne in mind that the institution of the third order of the ministry, though it may be illustrated by the appointment of ‘the seven,’ yet it does not rest upon that appointment for its binding force, so much as upon the injunctions which St. Paul gives in his first Epistle to Timothy; one of those three which are called the pastoral or hierarchical epistles, because they deal expressly and authoritatively with matters of this description.

3. I now proceed to notice a third objection which has been repeatedly urged against the threefold ministry, from the fact that the names which we give to the first and second

¹ See above, Lect. i. p. 58, note 2. The heading of the chapter in our authorised translation may be thought to leave the matter uncertain.

orders appear to be used in the New Testament, not as we use them, with a plainly marked distinction between the two, but indiscriminately,¹ and with reference (perhaps exclusively) to the second order alone. Common fairness required that, before this objection was pressed as it has been, account should have been taken of the similar or rather much greater diversity, which also exists between the New Testament use of the name of the third order of the ministry, and its employment not only by us, but by Presbyterians themselves, and by every other denomination of Christians. If we find, as we do find, in the New Testament, such a laxity of use of the original word *διακονία* (deaconship), that it is applied even to the apostleship, and that apostles are called by the name of deacons, and yet we conclude nothing from thence either against the apostleship, or against the diaconate, as distinct offices in the ministry; if this be so—as unquestionably it is—then, *à fortiori*, if we find a similar laxity of use of the original word, *ἐπισκοπή* (episcopate or bishopric), so that it is applied to the presbyterate, and that presbyters are called *επίσκοποι* (bishops or overseers), we are bound in like manner, if we would be fair

Indiscriminate use in
New Testament of
the names
episcopus
and *presbyterus*.

¹ See 'Irenicum,' p. 287 sq., and Professor Lightfoot, pp. 93-97. It is due, however, to Bishop Pearson, as the greatest scholar among Anglican divines, to state that he never yielded the point of the indiscriminate or synonymous use of the names *presbyter* and *episcopus* in the New Testament; and he has

shown that the confusion, if it exists, was not noticed by the Fathers till after the third century. See 'Vind. Ignat.,' pp. 556, 571 sq. He also proves that after the time of the apostles, that is, from the beginning of the second century, the name of *episcopus* was never given to a simple presbyter. (*Ibid.*, p. 547 sq.)

Those
names not
capable of
proper
translation.

and consistent, to conclude nothing from thence against either the presbyterate or the episcopate as distinct orders. The truth is that each of those three names has been rendered untranslateable by change of circumstances ; having been originally all used laxly and even interchangeably, and now (in their anglicised form of bishops, presbyters, and deacons) being all used strictly and definitively ; or, rather, in order to translate them properly, inasmuch as we can derive no theory from their employment in the New Testament, we must take our theory with us (which has been derived not from names but facts), and apply it in the best way we can—translating at one time strictly and definitely, according to the modern use, at another time laxly and indiscriminately, according to the ancient use. It may be doubted whether our translators have been always successful in this difficult task.¹ They have sometimes perhaps been lax where it would have been better to have been strict, as in Acts xx. 17, and in Titus i. 5, where they have translated ‘presbyters’ by ‘elders ;’ but more frequently they have been strict where it would have been better perhaps to have been lax ; as where they have spoken of the ‘bishoprick’ of the fallen apostle Judas (Acts i. 20) ; where they have translated the same word ‘the office of a bishop’ in 1 Tim. iii. 1 ; where they have translated *ἐπίσκοπος* ‘bishop’ in Titus i. 7 ; and where, in the first verse of the Epistle to the Philippians, we read ‘with the² bishops and deacons,’ when ‘overseers and ministers,’

¹ They are right in Acts xx. 28, ‘oversight.’

‘overseers ;’ and in 1 Pet. v. 2, ² There is no definite article in

in the then immature and unsettled state of the Church of Philippi, might probably have been safer and nearer to the facts.¹

Here, then, we are dealing, strictly speaking, with a question not so much of Church order, as of criticism and scholarship. And upon such a question it is satisfactory that we are able to produce the authority of perhaps the most eminent scholar and the most gifted critic whom the world has yet known—I mean Richard Bentley. In his controversy with the freethinker, Collins, who had attacked our translation of the New Testament, and, among other passages, had objected that, in Acts xx. 28, the word (*ἐπισκόπους*), which is rendered ‘overseers,’ ought to have been translated *bishops*, Bentley had occasion to take up this matter. Already, in discussing the right translation of the word ‘ecclesia,’ which originally meant, not a Church, but a political assembly, he had been led to remark, that ‘political words in different languages are seldom totally equivalent: and those foreign words that are not interpreted but adopted, and retained, as *apostle*, *bishop*, *priest*, *deacon*’—each of which is merely a Greek word turned into English—‘have always a narrower sense where they are

Explanation
of those
names
given by
Bentley.

the Greek; but a preposition going before renders its insertion in the translation at least excusable.

¹ Bentley seems to intimate the same, when he remarks, ‘if our awkward freethinker had changed

the tables and expostulated, not why here (Acts xx. 28) *overseers*, but *why not everywhere else*, he could not have been so easily answered.’ ‘Works,’ vol. iii. p. 380. See below, p. 161 sq.

transplanted than in their first soil.'¹ He then proceeds thus, in reference to the text which I just now mentioned:—

Acts xx. 28.

'Here, instead of *overseers*, he (Collins) would have it rendered *bishops*, that it might appear that *bishops* and *presbyters* in Scripture phrase are synonymous words. And what if they should be so, *iidem presbyteri qui episcopi*; the first the name of their age and order, the latter of their office and duty? Does he think to fright your bishops with this?' —For Bentley is writing not in his own name, but as a foreigner, a German, in a letter to an Englishman.—'Does this affect the cause of episcopacy? How then came Theodoret a bishop, Theophylact an archbishop, and

¹ Thus (1) διάκονος (with its derivatives, διάκονία the noun of office, and διάκονεω the verb), of our three clerical names the widest in signification, and found most frequently, besides being used to denote the position of a domestic servant and of a civil magistrate, is applied ecclesiastically not only to deacons properly so called, but to presbyters, bishops, apostles, and even to our Lord Himself.

(2.) πρεσβύτερος (with its derivative πρεσβυτέριον), besides being used to denote an elder, or senior in point of age, is applied ecclesiastically to Jewish elders and to Christian presbyters, perhaps also to bishops, certainly by apostles in speaking of themselves.

(3.) ἐπίσκοπος, (with its derivative

ἐπίσκοπη, the noun of office, and ἐπίσκοπέω the verb), though found much more rarely, besides being used in more general senses not ministerial, is applied probably to the presbyterate, perhaps to the episcopate, certainly to the apostleship and to the office of our Lord Himself.

(4.) Even the word Ἀπόστολος, which became official sooner than any of those, continued to be used in a non-official sense as equivalent to messenger, if the translation in Phil. iv. 18, 2 Cor. viii. 23, is correct.

See the author's Synodal Address for 1864, Appendix, c. ii., 'On the Nomenclature of the Orders of the Threefold Ministry, as used in the New Testament and in the earliest of the Fathers.'

Chrysostom a patriarch, not to be aware of it, when they expressly *affirm* what our writer would have *appear*? They, with all Christian antiquity, never thought themselves and their order to succeed the Scripture ἐπίσκοποι, but the Scripture ἀπόστολοι; they were διάδοχοι τῶν Ἀποστόλων, *the successors of the apostles*.¹ The sum of the matter is this:—though new institutions are formed, new words are not coined for them, but old ones borrowed and applied. Ἐπίσκοπος, whose general idea is *overseer*, was a word in use long before Christianity; a word of universal relation to economical, civil, military, naval, judicial, and religious matters. This word was assumed to denote the governing and presiding persons of the Church,² as διάκονος (another word of vulgar and diffused use) to denote the ministerial. The *presbyters*, therefore, while the apostles lived, were ἐπίσκοποι, *overseers*. But the apostles, in foresight of their approaching martyrdom, having selected and appointed their successors in the several cities and communities, as St. Paul did Timothy at Ephesus and Titus in Crete four years before his death, what names were these successors to be called by? Not ἀπόστολοι, *apostles*; their modesty, as it seems, made them refuse it; they would keep that name

How the
name *epis-
copus* came
to be re-
strained to
bishops.

¹ See above, p. 104.

² The two nearest English equivalents of the Greek ἐπίσκοπος are *overseer* and *superintendent*; and it is remarkable how far removed they both of them are from any meaning connected with episcopacy. An

overseer of an English parish is not the bishop, nor even the incumbent, but a lay official; and a *superintendent* may now signify the manager of almost any kind of work, *except ecclesiastical*.

proper and sacred to the first *extraordinary* messengers of Christ, though they really succeeded them in their office, in due part and measure, as the *ordinary* governors of the Churches.' I may add that the name would cease to be equally appropriate when they were no longer to be *sent out* to institute new societies of Christians, but rather were to stay at home and *superintend*, each in his own diocese, those already instituted. 'It was agreed, therefore,' he proceeds, 'over all Christendom at once, in the very next generation after the apostles, to assign and appropriate to them the word *επίσκοπος* or *bishop*. From that time to this, that appellation, which before included a *presbyter*, has been restrained to a superior order. And here's nothing in all this but what has happened in all languages and communities in the world. See the *Notitia* of the Roman and Greek Empires, and you'll scarce find one name of any state employment, that in course of time did not vary from its primitive signification. So that should our Lutheran presbyters'—Bentley, as I have said, is writing in the character of a German—'contend they are Scripture bishops'—as so many of my opponents in the public journals have done—'what would they get by it? No more than lies in the syllables. The time has been when a commander even of a single regiment was called *imperator*: and must every such nowadays set up to be *emperors*? The one pretence is altogether as just as the other.'¹

¹ 'Remarks upon a late Dis- leutherus Lipsiensis.' Bentley's course of Freethinking, by Phile- 'Works,' vol. iii. pp. 378-380.

These are the observations of one who, in the province of criticism, has had no superior. The assertion, however, which he makes respecting the change of name from apostle to bishop, as the received designation of the highest order of the ministry in the very next generation after the apostles, is pronounced by a living Presbyterian divine to be ‘against all probability. We cannot suppose,’ he writes, ‘that a whole class of Church rulers would willingly lay down their honoured title of apostles, and assume another less honourable.’¹ To me, on the contrary, I confess the case appears very supposable ; and when I take into account the actual circumstances, certainly I cannot see in it, as another Presbyterian writer has done, ‘a miracle of voluntary humiliation alike unexplained and unexampled.’² For what were the actual circumstances ? It is true the first bishops were successors of the apostles in some respects, but in some respects they were not their successors ; and whether or no we allow them to have been for the most part ‘humble and modest’ Christians—a character which both these writers have ventured to deny to them—they could not have been unconscious of the difference, and, unless we will suppose them to have been devoid of truthfulness as well as modesty, not unwilling to acknowledge and avow it by a change of name. But be

Foregoing explanation
unreasonably ob-
jected to.

¹ Dr. Crawford’s ‘Presbyterianism Defended,’ p. 53.

² Dr. King quoted, *ibid.* Is there not an example somewhat similar, not of the motive, but of the result, in the fact that Presbyterians

have condescended to surrender the name of *presbyter*, and even of elder, except in the case of lay elders, and to take in exchange for it the name of *minister* (*diaconus*)?

it so—that, in our want of charity, we are unable to suppose this—what is the alternative? Our uncharitableness must advance a step further; and we who have found it so difficult to believe in the humility which could submit to a change of name, must find it easy to believe in the pride which, together with the change of name, could and did, for its own aggrandisement, accomplish a change—a revolution, in fact—whereby ‘ Presbyterian bishops rising in their pretensions gradually slid into Prelatical bishops ;’ and to believe also in the universal faithlessness and pusillanimity which could submit to such a change, contrary to the system everywhere authorised and established by the apostles! This indeed is to believe *a miracle* of unnatural presumption and undutifulness alike unexampled and unexplained ; unexampled, more especially, as shown at a time of persecution and of martyrdom, which would be most sure to fall upon those who were in highest place ; unexplained, because, as we shall presently see, the only testimony which has seemed to offer an explanation is abundantly refuted and contradicted by itself. Moreover the belief of this latter miracle must include a disbelief of those episcopal successions, commenced in some cases before, in others immediately after, the deaths of the apostles ; whereas the belief of the former presumed incredibility naturally implies more or less directly the recognition of those well-attested facts which all ecclesiastical history accepts as such.

It does not appear to be necessary to say more under this head, unless I am to allude to the argument, which has

been so often and so vauntingly urged, that we see in the New Testament distinct notice taken of two orders in the ministry, and directions given to them, but no notice taken of, and no directions given to, the supposed highest and most important order.¹ This argument is used partly in forgetfulness of the fact that the writer who gives the directions was himself of that highest order ; and partly upon the assumption, which I have shown to be most unwarrantable, that Timothy and Titus, who received directions from the pen of St. Paul, and the angels of the seven Churches who received directions from Christ Himself by the pen of St. John, are to be regarded as—it matters not what—provided we deny them to have been prelates or bishops of their respective Churches. But more than this. The truth is, that if we were disposed to maintain, as some of our greatest and most learned divines² have maintained, that in places of Scripture, such as Phil. i. 1 and 1 Tim. iii. 2, 8, where two denominations only are specified, the three orders may yet be implied³—if we were to maintain this, we should be amply justified by similar use of language, both in Scripture itself and elsewhere. How often in the Old Testament do we find the names ‘Priests and Levites’ used so as to include the high priest ; and therefore to imply the three

Fallacy of
objection
that rules
are given in
New Testa-
ment only
for presby-
ters and
deacons.

¹ ‘Free Church Catechism,’ p. 117; Dr. Crawford’s ‘Serm.,’ p. 27.

² Such as Bishop Pearson. See above, p. 149, note.

³ Upon this supposition, when St. Paul has described a *presbyter*

who is *fit* to be made a *bishop*, he has no further occasion to specify the qualifications of a good *presbyter*, but may proceed at once to speak of the qualifications necessary for a good *deacon*.

orders of the Jewish priesthood! Nay, the word ‘priest’ is constantly employed even when the high priest alone is intended. Thus, in different passages we read of Aaron the Priest, Eleazar the Priest, Phineas the Priest, Eli the Priest, Ahimelech the Priest, Abiathar the Priest, Zadok the Priest, Jehoiada the Priest, Azariah the Priest ; and yet we know that all these were chief priests, and are so called in other passages. In like manner there would be nothing strange in supposing that either of the two words, *πρεσβύτερος*, or *επίσκοπος*, may be used to include, or even to designate, the chief presbyter, the chief overseer. Indeed we find that Irenæus, and some other of the earlier Fathers, have done this, at least in the case of the former of those words.¹ On the other hand, we have an example among ourselves of a twofold denomination, where a threefold is intended, and where not the former but the latter of the two words has the comprehensive application, in the case of the phrase, ‘bishops and curates.’ Under that expression all the three orders of the ministry are prayed for in our daily service, morning and evening, and again in the prayer for the Church militant. Yet what stranger might not infer from reading those words that the Church of England admits only of two orders, and those two—bishops and deacons—to the omission of presbyters? Moreover, in this use of the word ‘curate,’ we have another example, similar to that which Bentley produced in the word *imperator*;—only this is a case

¹ See above, p. 99 and p. 116.

of a word having fallen from a higher,¹ that was a case of one having risen from a lower signification. When our Prayer Book was compiled, the word ‘curate’ signified every clergyman below a bishop, having a benefice or *cure* of souls. Now it *never* means a beneficed clergyman, but only their assistants, whether presbyters or deacons; that is, it is now both lowered and confined to one and that the humblest class of labourers in the ministry.

Let me close my answer to this third objection with one remark. There is a well-known phrase in the Latin language—*verba dare*—literally ‘to give words,’ but meaning to give words and nothing more, when more was promised or implied; and so, to deceive a person, to impose upon him. And this has been the case (not indeed consciously, but really) in regard to the whole or greater part of the argument, as derived from the New Testament, in favour of Presbyterianism. It has been a ‘giving of words,’ and nothing more. Let it be understood that the word *presbyterus* was used at first in the Christian Church, as the word *ieρεὺς* certainly was in the Jewish, comprehensively of the two first orders. Let it be understood that the word *episcopus* was used during the apostles’ lifetime in a sense lower than that in which we now use the word *bishop*, as the word *diaconus* undeniably was used in a higher than that in which we now use the word *deacon*; let these simple matters, which every scholar comprehends at once as of ordinary occurrence,

Character
of the third
objection.

¹ Compare the names *parish* and *diocese*. See Bingham, bk. ix. c. ii. 1.

be generally understood, and whatever difficulty may have been felt in regard to the Scriptural application of these terms immediately disappears. And when was this assumed difficulty chiefly taken up and obtruded upon the Church? It was in an age ‘which,’ according to the testimony of Milton, an unexceptionable witness,

. . . hated learning worse than toad or asp.¹

The requisite learning in this case would have shown that, however the ancient Fathers and first interpreters of Scripture may be found to differ from one another in regard to the right interpretation of those passages of the New Testament in which the clerical names occur, there is not one of them—no, not even Jerome himself—who does not, in the view of those passages, recognise the *three orders* of the clergy as having existed in Scriptural and apostolic times.²

4. Objection.
Testimony
of some of
the Fathers
quoted on
the other
side.

4. In order to complete my notice of the objections which have been raised against the conclusions arrived at in this and my former lecture, it remains to examine the testimony of a few of the Fathers, which appears to be not indeed at open variance, but still scarcely reconcilable with what I have represented as the unanimous consent of patristical authority in favour of the threefold ministry.

The first of these testimonies is the epistle of Clement,³

¹ Sonnet xi. See also Twells' 'Life of Pocock,' p. 176: 'In those times of disorder and confusion, the contempt and even *hatred of learning* prevailed to a great degree.'

² See Bishop Pearson, 'Vind.

'Ignat.,' p. 555 sq., and on Jerome, pp. 561-563.

³ Stillingfleet's remarks upon it are to be seen in 'Iren.,' p. 310 sq., and p. 326 sq.

written from Rome to the Corinthian Church. In this epistle (of which I have spoken in a former part of this lecture) we have, it is true, no positive trace of an episcopate at Corinth ; and yet, it must be confessed, we find a state of things disclosed—a state of unruliness and disorder—in which, had there been a bishop, it is almost certain he would have been mentioned. On the other hand, however, it is to be borne in mind that the writer of the epistle was in all probability himself a bishop at the time—bishop of Rome ; that he appears to have been applied to for his advice and guidance, probably in that capacity ;¹ and that the epistle was written very early²—so early, according to the best authorities, as A.D. 69 or 70, i.e. only a year or two after the martyrdom of St. Paul, who himself had found the Corinthians the most ungovernable of all his converts. And to all this it is to be added, that we have certain evidence in the ‘History of Hegesippus,’ as quoted by Eusebius (iv. 22), that Corinth had received a prelatical ministry before the middle of the second century ; for he mentions ‘Primus,’ whom he himself had known and conversed with, as the bishop at that time.

2. The testimony to be derived from the epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians is of the same kind—simply negative. Both *presbyteri* and *diaconi* are mentioned generally (c. v. and vi.), as they were also in St. Clement’s epistle, and exhorted to discharge their respective duties ; and among the

See above,
p. 139.

¹ St. Jerome says, ‘Scripsit ex personâ Ecclesiæ Romanae.’—*Catal.* ^{Script.}, c. xv. vol. ii. p. 633.

² But see above, p. 85, note 1.

St. Poly-
carp.

presbyteri the chief presbyter or bishop may of course be included ; but, if he existed, he is not specified. Bishop Pearson suggests¹ that the see may have been vacant when Polycarp wrote. At all events, in this case also, we know that the writer of the epistle was himself a bishop—bishop of Smyrna—and that he had been appointed by St. John. Here, too, it is observable that the geographical relations between Smyrna and Philippi were not unlike to those between Corinth and Rome ; and, further, in days when the episcopate led so frequently to martyrdom—one, if not² both, of the writers of these two epistles suffered that glorious death—we must be prepared to expect that even when there was a duly ordained bishop, his name would be withheld from unnecessary publication, as was the case even in our own Church during the persecution of the last century.

Justin
Martyr.

3. Of Justin Martyr, a Samaritan by birth, and teacher of philosophy, who, having become a convert to Christianity, suffered at Rome A.D. 165, the testimony, though sometimes quoted as unfavourable to the threefold ministry, is still more inconclusive. It amounts only to this, that in giving a general description of the Christian assemblies for public worship in his first apology—a description intended for the information of the heathen Roman emperor, senate, and people—having no occasion to specify the three orders, he

¹ 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 551 ; but compare Lightfoot, p. 213, and see above, p. 102, note.

asserted by Ruffinus in the sixth century, is questionable. See Tillemont, ii. p. 124, and note.

² Clement's martyrdom, though

merely mentions ὁ προεστῶς, the person who presided, and the deacons. Of course the former, general, term would be strictly correct as applicable either to the bishop or, in his absence, to the presbyter, who would then perform the chief part of the service.¹

4. We have now to pass over from the middle of the second to the latter half of the fourth century. That is, all the evidence which is to be found on the other side till we come to the last-named date has now been produced ; and you have seen what it is. It is, in the strictest sense, merely negative. It affords *no sign whatever of the characteristic elements of the Presbyterian system*, of lay elders, of government by presbyteries ; and, instead of exhibiting a clerical parity, it exhibits at least a duality of orders. In short, it amounts to nothing more than an absence of direct proof in our favour, in the case of three writers, the latest of whom died less than seventy years after the death of St. John, viz. in the year 165 A.D. During the 200 years that followed—i.e. from 165 to 365—we have a superabundance of the most express and direct evidence of all kinds, but not one syllable of it is such as to cast, even negatively, a shade of suspicion upon the universality of the institution of the threefold ministry ; not one syllable is such as to indicate the existence—the theory or the practice—of *any other*, as having been either known then, or heard of previously in the Church. But now, at the termination of that long interval of 200 years,

So far the
evidence on
the other
side is only
negative.

¹ See Bishop Pearson's 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 569 ; Bishop Kaye's 'Justin Martyr,' p. 98.

St. Jerome.

His character and early history.

Like Aerius,
disappointed
of a bishop-
ric.

we come upon a witness whom it will be necessary to examine more at length, in consequence of the authority which attaches to his name, and to the judgment he has been supposed to pronounce upon this question. . The witness to whom I allude is St. Jerome. As in the case of Aerius, his contemporary, whom we have seen universally condemned as a heretic, it becomes important to know something of St. Jerome's history and character, in order that we may estimate his evidence at its real worth. A man of vast learning and abilities, but also of a hasty and intemperate judgment, and of an overbearing temper, which made him many enemies, he raised himself, while a sojourner at Rome, so as to become secretary to Pope Damasus, A.D. 382; and there is reason to think that, if it was not the avowed object of his ambition, he had at least cherished the secret hope of succeeding him in the bishopric.¹ But in this he was disappointed, as Aerius had been, when actuated by the same desire. Upon Damasus' death, in A.D. 385, Siricius was chosen to succeed; and, to add to Jerome's mortification, the new pope, it is said, refused to continue him in the office of secretary.² Upon this, leaving Rome in disgust,³ he retired into the East, and shortly after fixed

¹ He writes of himself to a Roman lady, as he was leaving Italy for the East, August, A.D. 385, after Damasus' death, 'Omnium paene judicio dignus *summo sacerdotio* decernebar.' He was then a presbyter. Epist. xlvi. ad Asellam. vol. i.

p. 481.

² See the Latin life prefixed to his Works, vol. i. p. 54.

³ He had not spared the Romans, clergy or people, while he dwelt among them, and henceforward, to borrow Dean Milman's words,

himself as a monk in a cell at Bethlehem. He had not been settled there many years before he involved himself in a serious quarrel¹ with his own immediate diocesan, John of Jerusalem, which was kept up between them with great bitterness, at least on Jerome's part,² so long as they both lived.

Settles at
Bethlehem.

The first work which he composed³ after he had retired to Bethlehem was his Commentary upon four of St. Paul's Epistles—to the Galatians, Ephesians, Titus, and Philemon. This he wrote at the request, and for the special benefit of two Roman ladies of noble birth, Paula and Eustochium, who had placed themselves under his spiritual guidance; and in order to ingratiate himself still further in their eyes, which he would be tempted to do all the more after the disparaging treatment he had recently experienced, he would naturally be led to magnify his own order in the ministry, which was that of a presbyter (ordained without a title⁴), and, as we have seen, a mortified and disappointed presbyter. Accordingly, in the third of those commentaries—on the Epistle to Titus, i. 5—we read as follows:—

'they became blacker and more inexcusable in his harsher and more unsparing denunciations.'—*West. Christ.*, i. p. 75. In one passage he describes the Roman clergy as 'Pharisæorum Senatus.' 'Præf. ad Libr. Didymi de Spir. Sancto,' vol. ii. p. 102 sq.

¹ According to Fleury, 'the great dispute' with John arose A.D. 392.

See Newman's transl., p. 228, where the causes of it are detailed.

² See Clinton, F. R., Append., p. 456.

³ A.D. 387 or 388. See 'Life,' ut supr., p. 68.

⁴ By Paulinus, at Antioch, see 'Life,' ut supr., p. 41, and Newman's note on Fleury, p. 257.

Commentary on
Titus i. 5.

'Let us attend carefully to the words of the apostle, who, pointing out what sort of person ought to be ordained¹ a *presbyter*, says, *If any be blameless, &c.*, and adds thereafter, *for a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God*. A *presbyter*, therefore, is the same as a *bishop*.' That is the first important statement. He proceeds, 'And before there arose, through the instigation of the devil, factions (*studia*) in religion, and people began to say, *I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, the Churches were governed by the common counsel of *presbyters*.' That is a second important statement. 'But (he continues) after that everyone came to think that those whom he had baptized were his own and not Christ's'—that is a third important statement—'it was decreed in the whole world that one chosen from among the *presbyters* should be placed over the rest, to whom all the care of the Church should appertain, and so the occasions of disunion should be taken away.' That is a fourth important statement. 'If,' he adds in reference to his first statement, 'anyone imagines that in declaring a *bishop* and a *presbyter* to be one and the same—the former being the name of their office, the latter of their time of life—I have stated merely an opinion of my own, and not of the Scriptures, let him read again the words of the apostle to the Philippians—*Paul and Timotheus . . . to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with (the) bishops and deacons*. Philippi is a single city of Macedonia, and cer-

¹ The word in the original properly means to 'place' or 'appoint.' They might have been *ordained* presbyters already. See p. 157, note 3.

tainly in one city there could not be several bishops, as they are now called (or reckoned).¹ But because at that time they called "bishops" those whom they also called "presbyters," therefore he speaks of bishops as of presbyters without any difference. Some one may perhaps still think the point doubtful, unless I prove it by another testimony. It is written, then, in the Acts that when Paul had come to Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, and summoned the presbyters of that Church; to whom, among other things, he said, *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over the² which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, &c.* Here, also, observe carefully how calling together the presbyters of that one city, Ephesus, he afterwards styles the same persons "bishops." Again,—he is now to produce proof in support of his third statement—'whosoever will receive³ the epistle which is written in the name of Paul to the Hebrews, there, too, the care of the Church is divided equally among several: for he writes, *Obey them that have the rule over you.* And Peter, in his epistle, speaks (in the same way) as follows:—*The presbyters which are among you I exhort, who am their fellow-presbyter, feed the flock of God which is among you, &c.*

¹ There is a variation in the MSS. between 'nuncupantur' and 'nunc putantur.'

² Literally 'in the which.' Jerome has 'in quo,' which the Greek requires.

³ It is important to observe this statement. It shows that if we are to listen to doubts respecting the

true constitution of the Christian ministry—notwithstanding the abundant evidence upon which it rests—because an author like Jerome, in the fourth century, chooses to cast a slur upon it, we have the same or greater reason to entertain doubts respecting the Canon of the New Testament. See above, p. 143.

(1 Pet. v. 1, 2). My design,' he adds, 'in all this, is to show that among the ancients presbyters and bishops were the same; but that *by degrees*¹ the whole care and charge was committed to one, in order that the dissensions which were growing up (*dissensionum plantaria*) might be eradicated. Therefore,' he concludes—with a suitable admonition to all his superiors in the ministry—'as the presbyters are well aware that it is the custom of the Church which makes them subject to him who has been set over them, so let the bishops know that it is the same custom of the Church rather than any reality of a divine appointment which has made them greater than the presbyters; and that it is their duty, while they govern the Church for the good of all (*in commune*), to imitate Moses, who, when he had it in his power to rule the people of Israel by himself alone, yet chose seventy persons to assist him in his jurisdiction (Numb. xi.).'

I have sometimes fancied that the main ideas of this passage may have been set down by Jerome (in a fit of spleen against bishops—his own bishop in particular) from recollection of what he had heard respecting the teaching of Aerius.² But be this as it may, the passage itself contains,

¹ 'Paulatim.' Stress has been laid upon this expression, as tending to show that Jerome did not mean a formal decree, but the gradual upgrowth of a custom. See 'Irenicum,' p. 281. But the gradual upgrowth was *during apostolic times*. See 'Comment. in Ep. ad Gal.', i. 19,

for a similar use of 'paulatim,' vol. vii. p. 330.

² Aerius was alive when Epiphanius wrote his work against Heresies, A.D. 376 (see Clinton, 'Fast. Rom.', Append., p. 445), and Jerome, though he was considerably younger, knew Epiphanius well.

as you have seen, four important statements ; and it is now our concern to mark how far the author of those statements has proved, or attempted to prove them. It is evident he was desirous to prove them as far as he could, under a consciousness that what he had stated might be supposed to be not the teaching of Scripture, but only an opinion or fancy of his own. If, therefore, he has failed in this respect, it may fairly be concluded that, from some cause or other, he had been carried away into assertions which he could not justify.

1. First, then, he has stated that, according to Scripture, a presbyter and a bishop are all one, not in name only, but in degree.

This he has attempted to prove by the fallacy of which I have before spoken, and which consists in the use of two ambiguous terms, *presbyter* and *episcopus*; while, at the same time, he has studiously kept out of view the position and authority of the apostles themselves and of apostolic men, such as James at Jerusalem, Timothy, Titus, the angels of the seven Churches, and the first beginners of the suc-

See below, p. 173. Dupin observes that Jerome was in the habit of adopting into his commentaries, without acknowledgment, the views and expositions of others ; and this even when he did not approve of them. Vol. iii. p. 103 ; and comp. 'Irenicum,' p. 278, where Stillingfleet (in making the same disparaging remarks founded

The passage
contains four
important
statements.

1st state-
ment of
St. Jerome
examined.

upon Jerome's own confession in a letter to St. Augustin) appears to have forgotten how much more his own side of the argument is dependent upon one of the commentaries (viz. on Ep. to Titus) than the other side is upon all the rest of the commentaries put together.

cession at Rome, and Antioch, and Alexandria, all of whom, as we shall presently see, he himself has elsewhere reckoned to have been bishops not in the presbyteral but prelatical sense.

2nd state-
ment of
St. Jerome
examined.

2. Secondly, he has stated that Churches were originally governed by the common counsel of the presbyters. Of this he has offered no better proof than the apostolical injunction addressed to the Hebrews in all parts of the world, *Obey them that have the rule over you, &c.*; as if the use of such language must necessarily imply that in every separate Church or congregation there must be several rulers to be obeyed, and not that each was to obey its own ruler; or as if, among several rulers, there might not be different degrees of rule, each to be obeyed according to his own degree, the bishop as bishop, the presbyter as presbyter, the deacon as deacon; which, in truth, is the very lesson St. Ignatius has expressly taught. And to this Jerome has added another testimony which, if possible, is weaker still; viz. from the injunction of St. Peter, also addressed to Jewish Christians dispersed abroad, where he exhorts *the presbyters, as their fellow-presbyter, to feed the flock of God*; as if that apostle might not be speaking there with the humility and self-abasement which his Divine Master had prescribed especially to one who would be first of all; and as if the higher order of the apostle did not include the lower order of the presbyters, according to the well-known maxim, ‘*Omne majus continet suum minus.*’¹

¹ Comp. below, p. 176, p. 191 sq., and above, p. 116.

3. Thirdly, Jerome has stated that the primitive Christians, and especially the clerical portion of them, were everywhere quarrelsome, and actuated by party spirit. Of this he offers no proof at all. Only we see that he had the Church of Corinth in his eye; and from this single instance he draws a universal conclusion! We also see from the same reference that the time to which his remarks are meant to apply was the very earliest time in the Church's history; a time about which (living when he did) he could know no more than we all know from Scripture itself; the time when St. Paul and St. Peter and St. John and other apostles were still alive, and governing the Church.¹ This, I say, we see, if not from the expression *I am of Paul*, &c., which may be interpreted, perhaps, more generally and with greater laxity, yet from the allusion to the circumstance of the baptizers claiming to themselves those whom they had baptized, a circumstance which comes to us authenticated in no other way but from the experience and the testimony of St. Paul himself.²

4. Fourthly, Jerome has stated that as a remedy for the universal quarrelsomeness which existed (so far as appears) only in his own imagination, a change was decreed, and gradually effected, still more imaginary, whereby the Churches

3rd state-
ment of
St. Jerome
examined.

4th state-
ment of
St. Jerome
examined.

¹ See Bilson, p. 291 sq.

² See Dodwell in Churton's edit. of Pearson's M. T. Works, ii. p. 389. The time of the supposed change is also proved to be apostolical from the epistle to Evangelus. See below,

p. 177. Comp. Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 318, 'Originem tantum spectat,' and p. 562, 'seris apostolorum temporibus, vel paulo ante obitum Petri et Pauli, vel certè ant mortem Joannis.'

everywhere ceased to be presbyterian and became prelatical; from which it is inferred that the result of the change, viz. prelacy, did not rest upon any divine provision, but only upon the received custom of the Church. But of all this, also, utterly at variance as it was with his own experience, and removed altogether from his own cognizance, he offers no proof whatever. *Where, when, or how* a decree of such vital consequence was passed, and thenceforth became the universal law not only of every portion of the Church, but of every sect of heretics (for, as I have before observed, the threefold ministry prevailed in the early heretical bodies not less than in the Church); and again, whether or no the supposed alteration was effected with the sanction of the apostles (if with their sanction, they must have repented of their original design)—nothing of all this does he condescend to explain. And the truth is, it did not admit of explanation.¹ Not only is there no mention in the New Testament of any such decree, of any such change, but there is not a syllable to suggest the faintest surmise of such an occurrence; no, nor in any other primitive record of any kind. Well, indeed, might Chillingworth declare² that he would sooner believe all the transformations of heathen mythology which Ovid describes than he would credit this fable—this dream—which the wounded vanity of Jerome attempted to impose upon his two female devotees, and through them upon the

¹ Stillingfleet's remarks upon the passage may be seen in 'Irenicum,' pp. 278–283.

² Vol. i. p. 485. And yet, see Dr. Cunningham's 'Church Hist.,' i. p. 66.

Church ! He does not, however, need to be rebuked by us for these wild imaginations. In the person of the heretic Aerius, he was abundantly rebuked, while alive, by the venerable metropolitan of Cyprus, Epiphanius,¹ who had been his friend and patron, and whom he himself has styled ‘patrem paene omnium episcoporum, et antiquæ reliquias sanctitatis ;’² nay, he was afterwards rebuked even by himself when he severely condemned his own bishop, John of Jerusalem, for using language only too similar to that of his own Commentary.³

But, after all, wild and fanciful as those statements of Jerome are, taken as a whole, what is the kind of shelter which they afford to the opponent of prelacy ? On the one hand, if he is to claim the benefit of those statements, he must, *ipso facto*, admit that the parity which he advocates has been introduced in contravention of a decree of the Universal Church—a decree passed in the very earliest times, and adopted as a necessary remedy for the very evils of which we have now so much reason to complain, and the existence of which must at least go to prove that the said decree ought never to have been violated, and needs now to be

The statements of Jerome, as a whole, of no real value to anti-prelatists.

¹ Epiphanius calls it ‘a mad assertion,’ to say that a bishop and presbyter are equal ; and again ‘to every sensible man it is manifest that nothing could be more foolish.’ Vol. i. pp. 906, 908 ; comp. above, p. 125. There is an absence of critical power in the writings of Epiphanius,

or he would probably have seen that, instead of using strong language, it would have been better to have exposed the *verbal fallacy*.

² Vol. ii. p. 365 ; comp. Fleury, *ut supr.*, p. 228.

³ See below, p. 183 ; and comp. Bilson, p. 358.

reinforced. On the other hand, what was it that Jerome himself would have as the practical result of those statements? Does he suggest that bishops, if they would do their duty, and be content with the position which the Scripture has assigned to them, should surrender their pre-eminence, and allow the Churches to be governed by a parity of ministers? No! He wishes bishops to do as Moses had done; not to cease to govern, but to admit the presbyters to partake of their authority and assist them in their charge; a sound and just determination—however visionary the premises upon which it rests—and one which no bishop, who understands either his duty or his interest, will ever venture to neglect.¹

St. Jerome's
epistle to
Evangelus

So much concerning this famous passage of St. Jerome's Commentary, which has probably produced more mischief in the Church than any other that was ever penned. There is, indeed, a companion to it,² though somewhat less mischievous, in one of his epistles—the well-known epistle to Evangelus (or Evagrius),³ which appears to have been written about the same time.⁴ His object in writing it

¹ See 'Irenicum,' pp. 335, 354, sqq., for examples of the practice of primitive bishops, and other testimonies to this effect.

² Both passages are quoted by Professor Lightfoot, p. 204, who derives from them the remark: 'To the dissensions of Jew and Gentile converts, and to the disputes of Gnostic false teachers, the development of

episcopacy may be mainly ascribed.' But is not this to attribute too much to mere secondary causes?

³ As it used to be quoted. See vol. i. p. 1192, and comp. p. 676, note.

⁴ According to Dupin, vol. iii. p. 93, 'about A.D. 387,' i.e. the same year. There is also an epistle of Jerome to Oceanus. supposed to

was to express his indignation (and he does express it!) at the presumption of the Roman deacons, who, being confined to 'seven,' in imitation of the number in the Acts, by a fanciful species of abuse, became men of wealth and consequence; more so in some respects than the presbyters, who were far more numerous, and whom they presumed to regard as their inferiors.¹ So that, whereas in his Commentary, Jerome's object had been to elevate presbyters in order to depress the episcopate, he now, in this epistle, endeavours to do the same, in order to depress the diaconate.² I need not quote the passage in full. Except that it says nothing of the Church being governed by the common counsel of presbyters, it repeats substantially the same statements—that presbyters and bishops, according to Scripture, were originally the same; but that afterwards, when there was a fear lest the Church should be torn in pieces by each of them attracting followers to himself, one was chosen to be placed above the rest as a remedy against schism. Again, however, we have no proof of this latter statement. In support of the former—the original equality of bishops and presbyters—the same texts are produced as in the Commentary; viz. Acts xx. 18, Phil. i. 1, 1 Pet. v. 1, 2; except that instead of

have been written ten years later, i.e. about A.D. 397, in which he repeats the statement that 'apud veteres iidem episcopi et presbyteri fuerunt, quia illud nomen dignitatis est, hoc ætatis.' (Ep. lxix. vol. i. p. 656.)

¹ See Euseb. 'H. E.', lib. vi. c. xliv.

² Comp. the author of 'Quæst. Vet. et Nov. Test.' 'De jactantia Romanorum Levitarum.' St. Aug., vol. iii. p. 2939.

the passage from the Hebrews before quoted, now (besides 2 John 1 and 3 John 1, which add nothing to the text of St. Peter) Jerome alleges also 1 Tim. iv. 14, respecting ordination ‘*with* the laying on of the hands of the presbytery ;’ and from 1 Tim. iii., Titus i. (where St. Paul gives directions about persons to be ordained, and in so doing, proceeds at once from the *bishop* to the *deacon*), he draws the remark : ‘St. Paul says nothing at all about presbyters, because in the bishop the presbyter also is contained’—a remark which is perfectly just, if properly understood ; for, as I before observed, that which contains must be something more and greater than that which is contained by it.¹

See above,
170.

Admissions
contained in
that epistle.

I have called this letter less mischievous than the Commentary on account of the admissions which we find in it. For instance, it admits that only bishops have the right to ordain ; stating, however, at the same time that this is their only legitimate distinction from presbyters :² and yet St. Jerome elsewhere testifies that, by the universal practice of the Church, bishops also alone administered confirmation.³ It declares expressly that bishops, besides being all equal in office, whatever the size or dignity of their respective sees,

¹ Elsewhere he says that St. Paul in Titus c. i. is giving directions for the ‘princeps’ and ‘pontifex’ of the Church. See ‘Comment.’ *in loc.*, vol. vii. p. 567; and ‘Adv. Jovin.,’ vol. i. p. 35; vol. ii. p. 258.

² This remark appears to have

been borrowed from Aerius. See Epiphanius, vol. i. p. 908. And St. Chrysostom, who repeats it on 1 Tim. iii., Hom. xi., may have borrowed it from Jerome. Compare below, p. 192, note 3.

³ ‘Contr. Lucif.,’ c. ix. vol. ii. p. 164 sq.

are also all successors of the apostles ; and it does not declare the same of presbyters.¹ It recognises the typical parallel of the high priest, priests, and Levites, with the bishop, presbyters, and deacons ; and, as regards the latter, it avows that parallel to be an ‘apostolical tradition’ taken from the Old Testament ; and finally it concludes, ‘What Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the Temple, that let bishops and presbyters and deacons claim to themselves in the Christian Church.’² The epistle is also more valuable to us than the commentary in this discussion, because it marks more distinctly the time at which Jerome imagined the change which he specifies (from presbyterian to episcopal regimen) to have taken place. It must have been while the apostles were still alive—and the change, if made at all, must have been made by apostolic authority, or, at least, with apostolic sanction—because he exemplifies his statement by the case of St. Mark as one whom the change in question had raised to be the first bishop at Alexandria.

It is true, this last statement is expressed in such a way that

¹ It must be admitted, however, that elsewhere (*‘Epist. ad Heliod.’*, vol. i. p. 352) he has spoken of the clergy generally as ‘Apostolico gradui succedentes,’ in opposition to monks, who could boast of no such distinction. Comp. *‘Iren.’* p. 308. But this need imply no more than that a portion of the clergy enjoyed a privilege which no portion of the monks enjoyed.

² See Bilson, p. 309. Young Stillingfleet’s attempt (against Pearson) to explain away this passage of Jerome may be seen in his *‘Irenicum,’* pp. 265 sqq., 283. He does not seem to have been aware that Jerome (after St. Clement) repeats the same comparison in other passages. See below, pp. 182, 183.

Practice of
the Church
of Alex-
andria
according to
St. Jerome,

the opponents of prelacy have attempted to discover in it a primitive usage on the part of presbyters, not only to appoint their president or bishop out of their own body, but even to ordain him. The words are these : ‘At Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist¹ down to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius [the 13th and 14th in the succession ; the date of the latter is A.D. 249], it was the custom for the presbyters to choose one out of their own body whom they placed in a higher grade and called bishop ; in the same way as if an army were to make its own general, or deacons to choose from among themselves one whom they knew to be diligent and call him archdeacon.’ It is quite possible that what St. Jerome here states may have been the practice at Alexandria ; but the statement, if correct, while it proves, as I have said, the primitive institution of prelacy in the case of St. Mark, or, at least, at Alexandria immediately after St. Mark’s death, it proves nothing in regard to ordination by presbyters.² On the contrary, in the very next sentence of the letter we read : ‘For what is there that a bishop does which a presbyter may not do, *except ordination?*’ It is certain that Jerome would not have made this exception if he had meant to say that the Alexandrian presbyters, down to A.D. 249, had been accustomed not only to elect but to consecrate their bishop. It is true that the spurious Ambrose, of whom I shall have occasion to speak presently, tells us that ‘In Egypt

¹ See above, Lect. i. p. 37.

Elrington’s ‘Life of Ussher,’ p. 257;

² See Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.,’ pp. 284, 289 sq.; Bingham, book ii. c. vi. sect. 3, vol. i. p. 87;

and Bright’s ‘Church Hist.,’ p. 20, note.

the presbyters *consignant*, i.e. administer confirmation, ‘if a bishop be not present;’ and in the anonymous work, entitled ‘Questions upon the Old and New Testament,’ now commonly supposed to have been written by the same author, we find a similar statement, but with a various reading in the text, which renders it uncertain whether *confirmation* or *consecration* (whatever the latter word may¹ mean) is intended to be ascribed to the Egyptian presbyters.² It is also true that more than four centuries afterwards, Eutychius, who was then (A.D. 933) patriarch of Alexandria, in a preserved fragment of his historical work upon the antiquities of his Church, does actually assert as follows:—‘The evangelist St. Mark appointed Hananias the first patriarch of Alexandria; and together with Hananias he also appointed twelve presbyters, who should remain with the patriarch, so that, when the see should become vacant, they might choose one of their body, upon whom the remaining eleven might lay their hands, and bless him, and create him patriarch. And this

and the
author of
‘Questions
on the Old
and New
Testament.’

Statement of
Eutychius.

¹ See Bingham, book xii. c. ii. sect. 2. He does not even mention the meaning of ordination.

² The words are: ‘In Alexandriā et per totam Ægyptum, si desit episcopus, consecrat (v. l. consignat) presbyter.’ See in St. Augustin’s Works, vol. iii. Append., p. 2941. Valesius in Euseb. ‘H. E.’ vi. 43, p. 313, reads ‘consignat,’ and interprets it of confirmation, in

both passages. Selden, ‘Comment. on Eutychius,’ p. 509, also reads ‘consignat,’ and is inclined to understand by it both ordination and confirmation. On the contrary, Professor Lightfoot reads ‘consecrat’ in both places, and supposes it may mean not only ordination of presbyters, but consecration of a bishop. P. 229.

practice continued to be observed at Alexandria to the time of the patriarch Alexander, A.D. 318, who ordained that, upon the vacancy of the see, the bishops should convene to consecrate a successor, and that the power of election was to be in their hands, without confining themselves to the twelve presbyters.¹ And further, he states that ‘whereas there had been no other bishop in the provinces of Egypt down to the time of Demetrius, that patriarch, the eleventh of the succession, ordained three.’ It would take me too far from the point before us if I were to enter now into the merits of this last testimony, but I promise to do full justice to them when these lectures shall appear in a printed form.²

Evidence of
St. Jerome
as collected
from his
other works.

We return, therefore, to Jerome and his letter to Evangelus. The admissions which escape from him in that letter form a very small portion indeed of the evidence which he has given us of a similar kind, and which it would puzzle the most ingenious disputant to reconcile with his dream first told to Paula and Eustochium. The truth is, there is no one author who helps us so much as Jerome does, to establish the true constitution of the Christian ministry, as of Scriptural and apostolical authority; there is no author who enables us so thoroughly to confute his own wild and fanciful theory; and this, for the most part, in works which he wrote at a later period of life, and when the unfortunate

¹ See Selden's Works, vol. ii. p. A.D. 1642.

² See supplement at the end of
422, who first published the frag-
ment in Arabic, with a Latin version. this lecture.

bias to which he had been previously subject would be likely to operate less forcibly upon his mind. You will be able to judge for yourselves of the truth of the remark which I have now made, if I simply lay before you a summary of the several statements bearing upon this question which are to be gleaned from the various writings of Jerome, arranged according to their contents, under four general heads, and with the date of publication, so far as it can be ascertained, affixed to each :—

I. In his book of ‘Biographical Sketches’—‘*De Viris Illustribus*’—written A.D. 392, in his sixty-first year,¹ he records :—

1. That Peter was bishop of the Church of Antioch, and afterwards became bishop of Rome. C. i. and v. vol. ii. p. 607.
2. That James ‘the Just,’ called the Lord’s brother, was ordained bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles, immediately after the passion of our Lord, and remained bishop for thirty years. C. ii.
3. That Mark as bishop of Alexandria was succeeded by Annianus. C. viii.
4. That John wrote his Gospel at the request of the bishops of Asia. C. ix.
5. That Clement, St. Paul’s fellow-labourer, was bishop of Rome C. v. and xv.
6. That Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom A.D. 115, was the third bishop of Antioch. C. xvi.

^{1. Bio-graphical sketches.}

¹ He was born A.D. 331, and died A.D. 420.

7. That Polycarp was ordained bishop of Smyrna by St. John. C. xvii.
8. That Papias, a disciple of St. John, was bishop of Hierapolis. C. xviii.
9. That Quadratus, a disciple of the apostles, was bishop of Athens, in succession to Publius, who had suffered martyrdom. C. xix.

2. Epistles.

II. In his Epistles :—

1. He speaks of St. Mark as first bishop of Alexandria, as before quoted. To Evangelus, A.D. 387 (?), vol. i. p. 1194.
2. He asserts that bishops occupy the place of the apostles. To Marcella, A.D. 384. *Ibid.*, p. 476.
3. He describes the Christian ministry as consisting of bishops, priests of the second order, and Levites. To Eustochium, A.D. 404. *Ibid.*, p. 904.
4. He compares the bishop, presbyters, and deacons to the high priest, priests, and Levites ; speaking of the parallel, on the part of these latter, as ‘an apostolical tradition derived from the Old Testament.’ See above, p. 177. To Evangelus, as before. And again, in another letter, he writes, ‘We should know the bishop and his presbyters to be what Aaron and his sons were.’ To Nepotianus, A.D. 394. *Ibid.*, p. 534.
5. He specifies the directions given by St. Paul to deacons, 1 Tim. iii., as directions ‘to the third order’—*tertio gradui* ; thereby alleging Scriptural and apostolical authority for the

threefold ministry. To Heliodorus, A.D. 373. *Ibid.*, p. 352.
Comp. ‘*Advers. Jovin.*’ lib. i. c. xxxiv. vol. ii. p. 258.

III. In his controversial Treatises :—

1. He repeats the parallel of the three orders as existing equally in the Old and New Testament : therefore they are equally of Scriptural and divine authority. ‘*Adv. Jovin.*’ lib. ii. c. xxviii. A.D. 393. Vol. ii. p. 325.

2. He asserts that neither presbyter nor deacon has the right of baptizing without authority of the bishop ; as Tertullian¹ had asserted nearly two — and Ignatius² nearly three—centuries before. ‘*Advers. Lucif.*’ c. ix. A.D. 379. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

3. He regards the Ark, with its measurement of thirty cubits, as typical of the Church ; which ‘multis gradibus consistens, ad extremum diaconis, presbyteris, episcopisque finitur.’ Therefore the type having been of divine institution, the antitype must be the same. *Ibid.*, c. xxii. p. 176.

4. He states that Clement was bishop of the Church of Rome. ‘*Apol. adv. Libros Ruffini.*’ lib. ii. c. xvii. A.D. 402. *Ibid.*, p. 439.

5. He tells John, the bishop of Jerusalem, that he had made ‘a grievous blunder at starting,’ *in portu naufragium*, when in a spirit of undue condescension and mistaken courtesy he had spoken of there being *little or no difference between a bishop and a presbyter*. ‘*Contr. Joann. Hierosol.*’ c. xxxvii. A.D. circ. 400. *Ibid.*, p. 390.

3. Contro-
versial
treatises.

¹ ‘*De Baptismo.*’ c. xvii.

² ‘*Ep. ad Smyrn.*’ c. viii.

6. Above all, he declares that the safety and well-being of the Church depend upon the dignity of the bishop—*summi sacerdotis*—and that if some special and pre-eminent authority be not given to him, there will be caused as many schisms in the Churches as there are priests—*sacerdotes*. ‘*Adv. Lucif.*,’ c. ix. vol. ii. p. 164.

4. Commentaries on Scripture.

IV. In his Commentaries :—

1. He asserts that Clement was bishop of Rome as Peter had been before him. ‘*In Isaiam*,’ c. liii. A.D. 410. Vol. iv. p. 504 sq.

2. He considers the episcopate the fulfilment of prophecy. *Ibid.*, c. lx. and lxi. pp. 596, 601.

3. He speaks of the three degrees of the ministry as being all worthy of honour. ‘*In Mich.*,’ c. vii. A.D. circ. 390. Vol. vi. p. 1220.

4. He states that the apostles ordained in the different provinces presbyters and bishops. ‘*In Matt.*,’ c. xxvi. A.D. 398. Vol. vii. p. 188.

5. He mentions James, the Lord’s brother, as having been the first bishop of Jerusalem. ‘*In Ep. ad Gal.*,’ lib. i. c. i. A.D. 387. Vol. vii. p. 230.

6. He does not appear to doubt what he records as the received account, that Peter was the first bishop of Antioch, and was from thence translated to Rome; although, he observes, St. Luke has omitted to mention these circumstances in the Acts. *Ibid.*, lib. i. c. ii. p. 341.

I make no use of the many important testimonies contained in the ‘*Chronica*’ of Eusebius, because, though that

work was translated by Jerome, and therefore, we may conclude, was considered by him to be generally trustworthy, in regard to any particular statement, it would not be fair to impute him a responsibility which he has himself declined. (Præf., p. 39.)

Now, in reference to the various passages¹ I have quoted from Jerome's works, it is important to observe that many have consisted of simple statements of fact, commonly received as such in the history of the Church, and as such accepted by him; whereas the two previous quotations—

¹ Most of them have been quoted by Hammond, 'Diss. Sec.', cap. xxix.; and by Bishop Pearson, 'Vind. Ignat.', pp. 318–323, and p. 561 sq. Stillingfleet, 'Irenicum,' p. 278, attempts to depreciate the testimony of Hammond's quotations, as being 'occasional and incidental,' in comparison with the other two, which he describes as 'designed and set discourses.' I mention the remark, and leave the reader to judge of its fairness and accuracy.

Blondel's 'Apology for the Opinion of Jerome' on the primitive equality of bishops and presbyters, written at the request of the Westminster Assembly, and published 1646, in a thick closely printed volume, has been answered, *so far as it went*, by Hammond (1651 and 1654), Pearson (1672), Samuel

Parker (1683), Hughes (1710). I say 'so far as it went,' for at p. 8, the author announces that 'he hopes to explain in its proper place, *infra sect. vi.*, the last part of Jerome's "Epistle to Evangelus," in which he speaks of *promotion from a less degree to a greater, of apostolical traditions, and of the disparity between Aaron, his sons, and the Levites.*' But Blondel's work consists of only three sections, and there is *no other evidence* that he ever intended to continue it. At all events, the said statements of Jerome remain *unexplained*.

The same has happened also in the case of Salmasius, who, as 'Walo Messal.' (1641), made a similar promise, p. 467, which has never been performed.

See Hammond, *Ibid.*, p. 124; Pearson, *Ibid.*, p. 321.

Character of
these adminis-
trations made
by Jerome.

from the Commentary on Titus, and from the Epistle to Evangelus—presented nothing more than a theory of his own ; a theory purporting indeed to be deduced from Scripture, but unsupported by any evidence, and appealing to no knowledge not accessible to ourselves, and for the most part inconsistent with the statements which he himself has made elsewhere. And well may it be asked, Are we to believe in Jerome when he indulges his own fancy, or his own spleen, and disbelieve him when he records historical facts, or testifies to the practice of the universal Church ?

Thus, then, we have not only examined, but cross-examined, this important witness ; and the result is, that the story, which he told at first, so far as it may have been designed, as it certainly has been employed, to impair the authority of the threefold ministry, has entirely broken down. Called, as it were, to curse, he has blessed it altogether. For what are the conclusions to which the evidence which you have heard, taken as a whole, indisputably leads ? They are these :—

Summary of
St. Jerome's
evidence.

1. That the episcopate, in Jerome's opinion, was an order distinct from and superior to the presbyterate ; and the presbyterate an order distinct from and superior to the diaconate.
2. That, accordingly, he recognised the three orders of the ministry, bishops, priests, and deacons.
3. That he regarded the three orders as necessary, and laid especial stress upon the highest order.
4. That he considered the three orders to be derived

not only from apostolical times, but from the apostles themselves.

5. That he held them to be Scriptural, and the episcopate the fulfilment of prophecy.

6. That bishops alone have the right of ordination.

7. That all bishops, whatever may be the size or dignity of their respective dioceses, are equally successors of the apostles.

Hence, then, it appears that one who has been brought forward as a leading and all-important witness by those who are commonly wont to pay little or no regard to the testimonies of antiquity, has not only failed to substantiate a single point in their favour, but has given against them manifold evidence of the strongest kind. And I am persuaded that had they been sufficiently aware of the general tenor and character of his works, he would never have been called into court. Notwithstanding his vast learning and unquestionable ability, he is sometimes very inaccurate, and this too when writing without personal bias, and with no apparent cause to disturb his judgment. To give but a single instance, which may suffice to show that in regard even to Scriptural matters, and such as are obvious to the most ordinary reader, he is not always to be trusted. He tells us that St. John founded (*ἐθεμελιώσε*) all the Churches of Asia,¹ whereas we know from the New Testament that Ephesus and many others were founded by St. Paul.²

¹ 'De Vir. Illustr.', c. ix. vol. ii. p. 626.

² Irenæus, iii. 3 (quoted by Eusebius, iii. 23), says expressly

Ambrosias-
ter's 'Com-
mentary on
St. Paul.'

There is still one other witness to be examined, who, though of much inferior authority, occupies a position upon this question somewhat similar to that of Jerome. I allude to the anonymous author of the 'Commentary on St. Paul,' which was formerly attributed to St. Ambrose, and is still printed as an appendix to his works, but which is now universally believed to have been compiled and partially written, either by Hilary, the Roman deacon (who was engaged in the Luciferian schism¹) or by some later author. He, too, whoever he was, like Jerome, has dreamed a dream; a dream which imputes the first institution of our present episcopacy not (as Jerome's did) to the quarrelsomeness, but to the general unworthiness of the senior presbyters;² but as (though living so late as the end of the fourth³ or beginning of the fifth century) he has offered no authority whatever for the statement, we may safely leave it, like other dreams, to be told and forgotten. And all the more because, in his waking moments, the same author has said all, or nearly all, that

that the Church of Ephesus was founded (*τεθεμελιωμένη*) by St. Paul.

¹ See Dupin, Cent. v. p. 189.

² On Eph. iv. 12, p. 241. At first, he says, the senior presbyter succeeded to a kind of prelacy; 'sed quia cœperunt sequentes presbyteri *indigni* inveniri ad primatus tenendos, immutata est ratio, prospiciente concilio, ut non ordo (seniority) sed meritum crearet episcopum.' See Bilson, pp. 283, 286, 310;

Heylyn, p. 216; and comp. Stillingfleet, 'Iren.', pp. 312, 330 sq.

³ The author himself says that he wrote 'sub Damaso,' who died A.D. 384; but the words have been thought to be an interpolation. Bishop Pearson supposes that he wrote before Chrysostom and Jerome, 'Vind. Ignat.', p. 560 sq.; and comp. Clinton, Append., p. 437. He has borrowed largely from the spurious Jerome, or *vice versa*.

we could desire ;¹ though perhaps not without a lurking tendency to depreciate the episcopate, which, if we knew who he was, and the circumstances of his life, we might be better able to account for.

Summary of
his evidence.

For example :—

1. He says that when St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, governors in the several Churches were not yet ordained (1 Cor. i. 1, p. 112. Ibid., vi. 5, p. 129). Consequently, the constitution or management of the Churches then was not in all things the same as it is now, in their complete and settled state. On Eph. iv. 2, p. 241.

2. He says that the angels of the seven Churches in the Book of Revelation were bishops. On 1 Cor. xi. 8, p. 147.

3. He says that because all things are from God the Father, therefore God decreed that each Church should be governed by its own bishop. Ibid., xii. 28, p. 153.

4. He says that ‘the apostles were bishops ;’ that in the bishop all the orders are contained, because he is the first priest (*sacerdos*), that is, the ‘chief of the priests’ (*princeps sacerdotum*) and *prophet* and *evangelist*. Eph. iv. 11, p. 241.

5. He says that St. Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, as individuals, because they had been made by him bishops respectively of Ephesus and Crete. Phil. i. 1,² p. 251. Comp. Prolog., pp. 290, 314.

6. He says that St. Paul (1 Tim. iii.), ‘after speaking of the bishop, goes on to treat of ordination to the dia-

¹ See Pearson, ‘Vind. Ignat.’, pp. 560, 574, where some of the following passages are quoted.

that verse so as to refer the title to Paul and Timothy, ‘qui utique episcopi erant.’

² He interprets ‘with bishops’ in

conate, because the ordering (*ordinatio*) of bishop and presbyter is one ; for either is a priest (*sacerdos*), yet the bishop is first ; so that though every bishop is a presbyter, yet every presbyter is not a bishop ; for the bishop is he who is the first among the presbyters.¹

7. Lastly, he signifies that ‘Timothy was an ordained presbyter ; but, because he had no one before him, he was a bishop. Wherefore, also, St. Paul shows him how he is to ordain a bishop ; for it was not allowable, nor indeed possible, that the less should ordain the greater. For no one is able to give what he has not received ;’—a confused statement, from which it is not altogether easy to discover whether the author considered that a third ordination was necessary or not ; only it would seem that he did *not* consider *o ἐπίσκοπος* (with the article) as used by St. Paul to be altogether synonymous with *πρεσβύτερος*. 1 Tim. iii. 8, p. 295.

Reflections
on this
evidence
and on
Jerome's.

And now, in parting from this witness, whose evidence, whatever else it may be good for, is certainly of no value (taken as a whole) to the presbyterian cause, there is one remark which must, I should imagine, occur to all our minds. Is it not obvious that a due feeling of reverence should have led him—and should have led Jerome also—to assume that the apostles, being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in matters of far less importance, would not—could not—have been left without direction in regard to so vital a point as the constitution of the Church’s ministry ; a

¹ Quoted by Lightfoot, p. 227.

point which, above all others, would be liable to cause among their converts jealousies and disputes, if known to be contingent upon their own choice? But, as God had given to Moses a pattern of the future tabernacle (Heb. viii. 5); as He had given to David, by inspiration, a pattern of the future Temple (1 Chron. xxviii. 12, 19); so was it not to be expected that the apostles would likewise receive their plan, duly prearranged and settled, upon which to work?¹ Had our two critics considered this as they ought to have done, they would have abstained from the indulgence of their own fancies, and would have piously concluded that what they saw and knew to be everywhere the uniform and well-ordered result, had been from the beginning the divinely-revealed and foreordained design.

I know of no other testimony that remains to be noticed, unless I am to allude to expressions of condescension, or of compliment; such as those in which St. Cyprian, imitating the humility of St. Peter and St. John,² addresses clergy of

Expressions
of conde-
scension
afford no
evidence.

¹ It is no proper answer (see Stillingfleet's 'Iren.', p. 177 sq.) to this question that *ceremonial details* were settled under the Law which are not settled under the Gospel. All that is pleaded for is that if *sufficient guidance* was given under the Law, *being such as it was*, we may conclude that sufficient guidance would be given under the Gospel, *being such as it is*; but without fundamental direction concerning the form of ministry (though not concerning ritual), the

guidance would be insufficient, as I have argued; young Stillingfleet, however, argued otherwise, p. 179. Comp. above, Lect. i. p. 18, note. It is further to be observed, that in the pattern of the Temple, delivered by David to Solomon, there was a constant reference made to the pattern of the Tabernacle delivered by God to Moses. See Bishop of Lincoln on 1 Chron. xxviii. 18.

² 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 John 1 and 3 John 1. But in all those passages there may be a reference to age.

the second order as his ‘fellow-presbyters ;’¹ or in which St. Augustin, though a bishop, tells a great scholar and divine like Jerome, though only a presbyter, that ‘notwithstanding the superior titles of respect which it is customary to give to bishops, in many things Augustin is inferior to Jerome.’² Nor, again, will it, I think, be worth our while to lay stress upon occasional language which the supposed necessities of a lax or inaccurate criticism of the sacred text may have led even an author like St. Chrysostom to use ;³ when we consider that long before his time the distinction between the first and second orders of the ministry was unquestionably as strongly marked as it has been at any subsequent period in the history of the Church.

And let it not be supposed that there is any inconsistency between this whole argument and those sayings of our Lord

¹ See above, pp. 170, 176. In like manner St. Paul speaks of many who were not apostles as his ‘work-fellows.’ Rom. xvi. 3, 9, 21, and elsewhere. Nay, our Blessed Lord Himself, being the Son of God, preferred to call Himself the Son of Man.

² Epist. lxxxii. 34, vol. ii. p. 303. ‘Quanquam secundum honorum vocabula, quæ jam ecclesiæ usus obtinuit, episcopatus presbyterio major sit, tamen in multis rebus Augustinus Hieronymo minor est.’ He could not have meant to imply that the episcopate was greater *only* in titles of respect.

Comp. Lightfoot, p. 228.

³ See, for example, on Tim. iii. 8, Hom. xi. vol. xi. p. 666 (upon which passage Dr. Cunningham has remarked, ‘Even in the beginning of the fifth century Chrysostom and Jerome could assert the primitive equality, or rather identity of the bishop and presbyter.’ ‘Church Hist.’ vol. i. p. 66), and the spurious Jerome on the same text in Jerome’s Works, vol. xi. p. 880, ‘Episcopos presbyterorum nomine comprehendit, quia secundus, immo pæne unus, est gradus.’ Compare above, p. 176.

when, on more than one occasion, He rebuked the ambitious rivalry of His disciples (Mark ix. 33-37, Luke ix. 46-48, Matt. xx. 24-28, Mark x. 41-45, Luke xxii. 24-27), or when He admonished them that as they were to call no man their father upon the earth, so neither should they themselves, like the scribes and Pharisees, seek to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi (Matt. xxiii. 1-12). It is evident that our Lord's intention on these occasions was not to condemn pre-eminence as such (which He expressly sanctions on the part of all the twelve), but the undue desire and ambition of pre-eminence;¹ and, at the same time, to teach that among themselves there was to be an equality of rank, which, while it justifies the order of bishops as coequal fathers and governors of the Church, would seem to denounce by anticipation the exorbitant supremacy which has been claimed by one.²

Such, then, is the evidence, Scriptural and historical, upon this great question—the question of the right constitution of the Christian ministry; and such the objections which have

Our Lord's condemnation of clerical ambition, how to be understood.

Foregoing evidence conclusive.

¹ See Blondel, *Præf.*, p. 49 sq.; and Hammond, 'Diss. Tert.', cap. ii. pp. 139-141.

² 'The bishop of Rome has not been content with the precedence of an elder brother in the see of St. Peter, but has claimed that of a master and father; and this command of our Lord (Matt. xxiii. 8) being broken, the unity and strength of the Church has been lost. But

it may be asked, Does not this command militate against the authority of individual bishops over their flocks altogether? It will be found on consideration that it does not do so; on the contrary, that *this divinely commissioned authority is the only remedy against the ambition which breaks up society.*'—Williams' *Holy Week*, p. 216 sq. See the whole passage.

been raised to invalidate its force. I venture to think that the objections have been shown to rest upon no solid foundation ; that the evidence is conclusive. I venture to believe that if the case were to be submitted to the judgment of any competent tribunal in this country—simply upon the matter of fact and of constitutional right—there would be no hesitation as to the verdict which would be pronounced. I venture to maintain that there is nothing of the same importance in the world's history which stands upon stronger testimony ; and that, whatever there may be of doubt or difficulty concerning it, which has not been manifestly caused by human failings or excesses on the part both of governors and governed, is no more than was to have been expected, to try our faith and obedience in accordance with God's dealing with us for our moral probation in other instances.

Summing up of argument from Scripture and history.

And now, having laid this evidence before you, I ask for nothing but a patient and impartial examination, such as may lead to the discovery of the truth ; and that, when the truth is discovered, justice may be done accordingly. In a word, we ask from you what John Knox asked from the opponents of the Reformation. Shall we ask in vain, as he did ? Speaking for his brethren and fellow-reformers, as well as for himself, ‘We are content,’ he said, ‘not only that the precepts and rules of the New Testament, but also the writings of the ancient Fathers . . . decide the contest.’¹ And again : ‘Let God speak by His law, by His prophets,

¹ ‘First Petition to the Queen Regent’ in 1558. Knox’s Works, i. p. 305.

by Christ Jesus, or by His apostles, and so let Him pronounce what religion He approveth: . . . and if my adversaries think to have advantage by their councils and doctors, this I further offer, to admit the one and the other as witnesses in all matters debatable.¹ We continue that appeal against the usurpations and corruptions of the Church of Rome; but we repeat it also with equal confidence in favour of a system such as can be proved to rest upon Scripture and upon the example of the Primitive Church. Are we unreasonable in this? Will you reject our petition? Will you oblige us to continue in apparent separation? I address myself now more especially to those who represent the Church established in this country—will you oblige us to continue separated and excluded from the national embodiment of our common Christianity, because we cannot consent to separate ourselves from the only system which the Universal Church has recognised, and which is established in the sister country; from the system which rests, as I have said, and as you yourselves have seen, upon abundant Scriptural and apostolical authority, and which, even though it rested upon no better sanction than the primitive *decree throughout all the world* which Jerome dreamt of, ought not to be abrogated without a decree of equal authority to justify the change? Will you persist in your determination—as it stands now expressed in the ordination-promise required of all your ministers and elders²—to say to us for

Appeal to
members of
Established
Church of
Scotland.

¹ 'Appellation to the Nobility,' ² Elders are required to declare
vol. iv. p. 518 sq.; see also p. 446. that they 'own and acknowledge

all time to come :—‘ Brethren though you are, and with title-deeds to show far more ancient than our own, yet you shall have no portion, no inheritance with us, in the Church of your fathers, unless you will consent to adopt and maintain exclusively those standards of doctrine and of worship which owe their origin to a period not of religious reformation, but of political turbulence and civil war?’ If on these accounts our exclusion is to be continued ; if on these accounts a division is to be kept up, and the ecclesiastical concord which we crave is to be denied ; I will urge you no further. I will not ask, Is not this harsh ? Is not this unbrotherly ? Is not this unchristian usage ? But I appeal to a higher tribunal. The Lord judge between us and you !

The third and last head of the main argument—viz. that which arises from consideration of consequences—remains to be treated of in my next and concluding lecture.

Presbyterian Church government, now settled by law to be the only government of this Church, and that they will submit thereto and concur therewith, and *never directly or indirectly endeavour the prejudice or subversion thereof.*’ To which

ministers and probationers are required to add that they are ‘persuaded that the Presbyterian government of this Church is founded upon the Word of God and agreeable thereto.’

SUPPLEMENT TO LECTURE II.

On the Testimony of Eutychius, &c.

(See above, p. 179.)

THE value of the testimony of this mediæval patriarch has been keenly contested on both sides ; because *if accepted* it appears to afford at least one conclusive proof that ordination, or rather, what is more, consecration, by presbyters, was allowed from the beginning in the primitive Church, and continued, if nowhere else, yet in so important a see as Alexandria, even to the early part of the fourth century.

It was, as I have said above, the learned John Selden, who, in 1642, the year before the meeting of the Westminster Assembly—*of which he was himself a prominent member*—first gave to the world, from an Arabic MS., the fragment of Eutychius' historical work which contains the testimony in question ; claiming at the same time for the author of it a character not less trustworthy than that of our own Bede (*Works*, ii. 418). And probably the appearance at such a time of such a testimony may have produced an effect prejudicial to episcopacy¹ not inferior to that which the appearance of ‘Eikon

Fragment of
Eutychius,
first printed
by Selden
in 1642.

¹ ‘That learned man (Selden) having been censured by the High Commission for some offensive passages in his “History of Tithes,”

became not a little displeased with some bishops of the Church of England ; and the resentment of that former usage lay deep in his

E. Pocock.

Basilikè seven years afterwards produced in favour of the restoration of the monarchy and of the Church. The entire work¹ of Eutychius was not long after, viz. in 1658, published at Oxford by the celebrated Oriental scholar Dr. E. Pocock, who had undertaken it at Selden's request, but who felt no sympathy with his opposition to episcopacy, and who also entertained a much lower opinion of the general trustworthiness of the patriarch's performance: and, as it would appear, not without reason, both from internal evidence (for example, the writer states that 2,048 bishops were present at the Council of Nice, and he makes a bishop of Origen, and places him in the middle of the sixth century !), and from the fact (which Pocock himself discovered from another Arabic work which he afterwards published) that the archives of the Church of Alexandria, from which Selden 'had no doubt' that Eutychius had derived much of his annals, were all destroyed by fire when the city was taken by the Saracens, A.D. 638, three centuries before.² In short, it seems to be now agreed that the general character of the work is not unfairly described in the words of Du Pin: "Tis full of fables and very vulgar stories."³

D. Blondel.

But to return to the testimony itself. It was first made use of by Blondel, in his famous 'Apologia pro sententiâ Hieronymi,' 1646; see Praef., pp. 17-20. The first answer was from the pen of Thorndike, 1649; see 'The Right of the Church in a

H. Thorndike.

mind, and was at length sufficiently discovered by him.'—Twell's 'Life of Pocock,' p. 225 sq. See also Walton's 'Proleg.,' xiv. 10; but comp. Aikin's 'Life of Selden,' p. 122.

¹ It consists of annals from the beginning of the world to A.D. 900.

² See Twell's, *Ibid.*, p. 228, and

Hughes in Hickes' 'Treatises,' vol. iii. p. 49. The Arabic work alluded to is the 'Oriental History of Gregory Abulpharagius,' primate of the Eastern Jacobites, A.D. 1266.

³ 'Eccles. Hist.,' vol. viii. p. 4. Cave, 'Hist. Lit.,' vol. ii. p. 96, speaks of it in the same way.

Christian State,' pp. 498–500. This was followed two years afterwards (1651) by Hammond in his fourth Dissertation against Blondel (c. x. pp. 177–179). Both decline to believe the assertion of Eutychius, that before Demetrius there were no bishops in the whole of Egypt besides the patriarch of Alexandria; and consequently 'cannot admit his relation to be historical truth.' But Dr. Bryan Walton, four years later, in the Prolegomena to his celebrated Polyglott, 1657, not only rejects the statement as incredible, but speaks of the author in the most contemptuous terms (c. xiv. sect. 10). Again after two years, viz. in 1659, appeared young Stillingfleet's 'Irenicum,' who professes to answer Hammond (p. 273 sq.), and wishes to know 'who and where those bishops in Egypt were who did consecrate and ordain the bishop of Alexandria after his election by the presbyters, especially while Egypt remained but one province, under the government of the *Præfector Augustalis*.' The work of Abraham Echellensis, a learned Maronite, who took up the opposite side of the question, at Rome, in 1661, I have not seen; but probably it contains nothing of importance which has not been urged at least equally well from the same point of view by Bishop Pearson (who refers to it, pp. 290, 303, sq.) in his 'Vindiciae Ignatianæ,' 1672, where he elaborately discusses the whole question (Part i. c. xi.). He begins by noticing the inconsistency between Jerome's statement and that of Eutychius; the former asserting that the practice of the Alexandrian presbyters to choose their bishop ended with Heraclas and Dionysius, in the earlier part of the third century; the latter that it ended with Alexander, nearly a whole century later (p. 283). He considers it incredible that the consecration of the patriarch was made without bishops; and he remarks that had Jerome known of any such custom, he would certainly have mentioned it in his letter to Evangelus (p. 286). He points out that in the 'Apostolical Constitutions,' book vii. c. xlvi. sect. 4

H. Ham-mond.

B. Walton.

Stillingfleet.

Abraham
Echellensis.Pearson's
arguments.

(where see Coleterius' note) Avilius, or Abilius, the second bishop of Alexandria, is said to have been ordained by St. Luke (p. 289). He rejects the statement of Eutychius as to the non-existence of bishops in Egypt before the time of Demetrios (about A.D. 190); repeating the fact respecting the destruction, long before, of the Alexandrian archives (on which see Arch-deacon Churton's note in answer to Gibbon) as a ground for refusing credit to an annalist of the tenth century, whose inaccuracy at the same time he exposes upon other points (pp. 292-296); and in regard to the matter stated, he shows by various proofs,¹ that Egypt was not without bishops before the end of the second century; and he infers the same from the circumstance (for which see Athanasius' 'Hist. Tracts,' p. 300) that in A.D. 324 nearly a hundred bishops of Egypt and Libya met together at the call of Alexander, then patriarch of Alexandria, to condemn Arius and his supporters (pp. 296-303).

Gibbon.

But notwithstanding all this, Gibbon, in the notes to the fifteenth chapter of his Roman History, has not failed to let us know, more than once, that he is not persuaded by it. His words are (vol. ii. p. 332): 'The ancient state, as it is described by Jerome, of the bishop and presbyters of Alexandria, receives a remarkable confirmation from the patriarch Eutychius, whose testimony I know not how to reject, in spite of all the objections of the learned Pearson, in his "Vindiciae Ignatianæ." And again, he states in his text (*Ibid.*, p. 363): In Egypt, 'the progress of Christianity was for a long time confined within the limits of a single city, which was itself a foreign colony (Alexandria); and till the close of the second century, the predecessors of Demetrios (the Alexandrian patriarch) were the only prelates of the

¹ Dr. Neale, however, admits that none of those proofs can be considered decisive. 'Hist. of the Church of Alexandria,' vol. i. p. 11, note.

Egyptian Church. Three bishops were consecrated by the hands of Demetrius, and the number was increased to twenty by his successor Heraclas.' And then he adds in a note : 'This curious fact'—if he means the latter statement, it certainly is *most curious and utterly unexampled* in the history of the Church that one single bishop should appoint twenty—'is preserved by the patriarch Eutychius, and its internal evidence would alone be a sufficient answer to all the objections which Bishop Pearson has urged in the "Vindiciae Ignatianæ." For my own part I can see no 'internal evidence' in the passage, or in the context as given by Selden, to justify this description. On the other hand, Professor Lightfoot, though he follows on the same side, does so out of regard not to internal but external evidence. He remarks : 'The authority of a writer so inaccurate as Eutychius, *if it had been unsupported*, would have had no great weight ; but, as we have seen, this is not the case' (p. 229). What, then, has been 'the support' which the Professor refers to ? I can see none but that of Jerome and of the spurious Ambrose (as above quoted, p. 178 sq. and note 2) ; the former of whom could not, as we have shown, have meant to imply *ordination* by presbyters, even at Alexandria, and the latter must be regarded as at best an insufficient witness so long as his text and the meaning to be assigned to it are both uncertain. Be this, however, as it may, it is evident that Dr. Lightfoot accepts the Eutychian statement of the non-existence of bishops in Egypt till the time of Demetrius in all its breadth. He writes : 'At the close of the second century, when every considerable Church in Europe and Asia appears to have had its bishop, the only representative of the episcopal order in Egypt was the bishop of Alexandria. It was Demetrius first (A.D. 190-233), as Eutychius informs us, who appointed three other bishops, to which number his successor Heraclas (A.D. 233-249) added twenty more.' And further he remarks : 'This

Professor
Lightfoot.

extension of episcopacy to the provincial towns of Egypt paved the way for a change in the mode of appointing and ordaining the patriarch of Alexandria. But before this time it was matter of convenience and almost of necessity that the Alexandrian presbyters should themselves ordain their chief' (p. 230).

J. M. Neale.

It only remains to lay before the reader the opinion of the late learned Dr. Neale, in his valuable 'History of the Alexandrian Church.' He begins (vol. i. p. 9) by remarking that though the statement of Eutychius has been repeatedly noticed and *confuted*, a history of the Church of Alexandria would be incomplete without an examination into its truth. Taking the story as it stands, he considers it impossible to believe 'that the second see in the Catholic Church was for the space of one hundred and fifty years governed by arch-priests ; that these men, during that period, refrained from the ordination of other bishops, though presuming to lay hands on priests¹ and the inferior order of the hierarchy ; that the eleventh patriarch asserted his claim to consecrate bishops ; and that six of his successors (i.e. between Demetrios and Alexander), for nearly a hundred years, persevered in this practice,² without a remonstrance from, and enjoying communion with, every other branch of the Church.' He admits indeed that some foundation for the story is to be found in Jerome's statement ; at least so far as to forbid us to treat it as a mere fabrication of Eutychius ; but he considers that the words of the latter, though apparently so much stronger, no more really imply ordination than those of

¹ This does not follow necessarily from Eutychius' statement. The patriarch might have ordained them; though this, of course, would add nothing to the validity of ordination, if he himself had been ordained only by presbyters.

² This appears to mean, the practice of being consecrated by presbyters. The only patriarchs who are said by Eutychius to have consecrated bishops, are Demetrios and his successor Heraclas.

the former. He writes : 'It may well be asserted that the words of Eutychius refer to the election, not the consecration of the bishop. It was the custom in the early Church that not only presbyters but even laics laid their hands on the heads of the party so chosen ; and this was the case more especially in the Coptic Church, as writers, both Catholic and Jacobite, allow. And Echellensis has clearly proved that in many instances at least a triple imposition of hands took place ; of the people voting, of the presbyters electing, of the bishops consecrating. At the same time the presbyters of Alexandria had certain privileges which the presbyters of other Churches did not enjoy ;¹ and these two facts coming together to the knowledge of an ignorant writer like Eutychius, may have occasioned the fable to which the unhappy consequences of the Western Reformation have given such undue celebrity.' To this explanation he adds the following : Prepared to grant that the patriarch may have been really ordained by those twelve (eleven) presbyters, he infers that, if so, they must have been 'an episcopal college, retaining the name which in the primitive Church was used synonymously with bishops.' He considers that either of these explanations is 'perfectly satisfactory' (pp. 10-12).

¹ More especially provincial letters jointly with the patriarch's. *Ibid.*, were addressed in their name con- p. 12.

LECTURE III.

It has been shown in my two former lectures, first, that a ministry, uniform and of a particular character, was antecedently to have been expected in the Christian Church ; and, secondly, that such a ministry existed from the beginning, and continued everywhere to exist (though in the West, for many centuries, in a corrupt and exaggerated form, through the undue influence of the Church of Rome) till the period of the Reformation ; and that it still exists, reformed or unreformed, over by far the largest portion of Christendom—east and west, north and south—at the present day.

Argument
from evil
conse-
quences
due to dis-
regard of
foregoing
conclusion.

I have now to ask your attention to several considerations, which will appear in the form of consequences ; some of them tending more or less directly to justify and confirm the conclusion which the two preceding lines of argument have led us to adopt ; while others, I am conscious, will add nothing in the way of proof, and are only valuable as giving force to this appeal, upon the *assumption* that the point in question has been already proved.

i. In the first place, then, it will not be denied that a

disregard of the position which I have sought to establish, is calculated to lead, and has actually led, to the practice of separation, and to a growing indifference to that practice. In saying this, I do not mean to imply that the acceptance of that position has been,¹ or ever will be, found sufficient of itself under all circumstances to secure us against separation. All I intend—and would maintain—is, that the apostolical institution of one uniform system of the ministry, and a firm belief in that institution, supposing it to be proved, cannot but be powerful instruments to deter us from divisions, and to assist us in keeping or recovering unity. Now, whatever ideas we may severally entertain of the duty of union, and communion among Christians, as prescribed in Scripture, I think we shall all admit² that our present

First evil
conse-
quence :—
Indifference
to unity,
though
taught in
Scripture :

¹ St. Irenæus taught that all who belong to the Church ‘preserve the same form of ecclesiastical constitution,’ or ‘ordained ministry.’ Book v. c. 20. And yet there were even then many heretics who became also schismatics. Nevertheless, we know the remark of St. Cyprian, and even of St. Jerome, and we do not doubt that it contains truth. ‘Neque enim aliunde hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata, quam inde quod sacerdote Dei non obtemperatur.’—Cyprian, Epist. liv. (or lix.) *ad Cornel.*, vol. iii. p. 802. And again Epist. lxviii. (or lxvi.) *ad Florent.* Papian. : ‘Inde enim schismata et hæreses

obortæ sunt et oriuntur, dum episcopus, qui unus est, et ecclesie præest, superbâ quorundam præsumptione contemnitur.’—Vol. i. p. 403. ‘Ecclesiae salus in summi sacerdotis dignitate pendet; cui si non exors quædam, et ab omnibus eminens detur potestas, tot in ecclesiis efficiuntur schismata, quot sacerdotes.’—Jerom. *Dial. contr. Lucif.*, vol. ii. p. 165.

² This has been admitted by ministers of the Established Church, such as Dr. Bisset, in his Moderator’s Address for 1862, and of the Free Church such as Dr. Guthrie, in his speech at Blair-Atholl, of the same year—both quoted in the

condition is not what it ought to be in this respect. Most of us, it is to be hoped, would be glad to see somewhat less of inconsistency between the actual relations in which fellow-Christians, especially of the same country, the same language, the same neighbourhood, now live as such, and the plain requirements of the Word of God.¹

and intended and
desired by
Christ.

We have been told indeed that ‘the average Presbyterian does not deem it necessary to attend to antiquarian and Scriptural arguments,’ such as have been brought before you in my former lectures, ‘because they seem to him to be attempting to prove what cannot be true ; inasmuch as God cannot be conceived to have spoken miraculously on a mere matter of detail and convenience like Church government.’² But surely it is not inconceivable that God should have done under the Gospel what it is certain He did under the Law. And, still more is it conceivable that the Divine Founder of the Christian Church should desire to preserve from disorganisation the Society which He instituted ; and if ‘a matter of detail and convenience, such as Church

author’s ‘Bicentenary Lecture’ delivered at Kidderminster, 1862, pp. 31–40. ‘We are beginning to feel the *inexpediency* of schism ; we shall next feel its *sinfulness*.’—Rev. P. Grant, of Tenandry, at a meeting of the presbytery of Dunkeld, April 26, 1870. Since the year of Dr. Bisset’s Address, almost every moderator of the Established

Church has spoken, more or less, on the evils of separation.

¹ ‘There are at the present moment in Scotland fourteen distinct Churches, or complete Christian organisations, competing for the attachment of the nation.’—Dr. R. Wallace, in ‘Recess Studies,’ p. 187.

² *Ibid.*, p. 204 sq.

government,' would be calculated, as certainly it would, to assist in this, then so far from pronouncing it inconceivable, we should certainly expect Him, in His goodness, to afford such assistance. I repeat therefore that, if we desire to please God, and to obey His commands in regard to unity among fellow-Christians, we shall (among other means for producing that result) endeavour to ascertain the divine intention in regard to the constitution of the Church's ministry. If episcopacy be in accordance with that intention (as, I think, I have shown it is), then, as one way towards diminishing our separations, let us add to our presbyterianism what it now improperly wants. If presbyterianism be in accordance with that intention—and can be proved to be so by fair argument—then let it be asserted as such. If it can be proved only to be 'defensible,' then I cannot see what claim it has to be established, to the entire exclusion of other systems also, upon that theory, granted to be defensible ; and sure I am, it never would have been established, to the exclusion of a reformed episcopate, if, in the first instance, it had been content to rest upon such a plea. But the point which we have to keep in view is this. The theory that a Church which is accepted and established as national, is merely defensible, or even is merely preferable, has a direct tendency to cause indifference to separation ; and so tends, indirectly at least, to produce it. Let us not then be told of established presbyterianism (non-established presbyterianism will often hold a bolder and more consistent tone), that, having thrust itself into the place

The course
to be taken
by all lovers
of Christ,
and of His
truth.

of authority and of privilege, in which God's truth alone should be enthroned, it now 'detests proselytising ;' it now declines to assert that truth ; and that being lawfully settled in the sole possession of the national kirks and manses, it now only desires to leave alone and be left alone. And yet not altogether to leave or be left alone ; for it seeks and even claims¹ support for new endowments, and augmented stipends, upon the plea of its established position, from the descendants of those whose forefathers, because it pronounced them to be in error, and avouched itself to be the truth, it unmercifully dispossessed of all privilege and all endowment ! Or, once more, if popery be in accordance with the divine intention, and can be proved to be so, then let us not only accept a national episcopate, in addition to our presbyterianism, but let us further add the authority of a foreign autocrat ; let us submit ourselves, one and all, to the spiritual supremacy of the bishop of Rome. But let us not go on any longer in this pitiful, this most miserable bewilderment ; as if, upon so great a matter as the constitutional ministry of the Christian Church, there were no such thing as truth or untruth, right or wrong ; or at least, if there be, that we, for our part, are unable to discover them ! I was asked the other day, by a most excellent lady, to subscribe to a charitable institution for imbecile children, and I did so, though not without some misgiving ; for upon

¹ See the speeches delivered at the public meeting, held at Glasgow, in behalf of 'the Church of Scotland Association for Augmenting the smaller Livings of the Clergy,' December 1866.

enquiry respecting the religious training of the children, I found, from the printed report which was put into my hands, that all difficulty had been amicably smoothed over by the boys being taken to the Established, and the girls to the Free Church ! Are we not, most of us, upon this great question, in such a state of childish imbecility, that we should be no unfit inmates for such an institution ?

This, then, is the first evil consequence which flows in part at least from our non-acceptance of the truth,¹ that there is a right constitution of the Christian ministry, and that we may ascertain it if we will. The Word of God did not mock at the poor and the unlearned when it told them to ‘avoid those who cause divisions’ (Rom. xvi. 17) ; and when it reckoned ‘separations’ among ‘the works of the flesh,’ and assured us that ‘they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God’ (Gal. v. 20, 1 Cor. iii. 3). It did not mock at the poor and the unlearned when it bade them to be ‘all of one mind’ (1 Pet. iii. 8, Phil. ii. 12, Rom. xii. 16, xv. 5) and to ‘live in peace,’ and that so ‘the God of love and peace would be with them’ (2 Cor. xiii. 11), or when it besought them all ‘to speak the same thing,’ and that there should be ‘no divisions (or schisms) among them’

Scriptural proof of God's will in regard to unity.

¹ Let me explain, once for all, that I have no wish to enforce this word, as so used, in its highest sense, upon the consciences of others, whatever may be my own opinion concerning it. I am quite content that it should be understood

to imply no more than some suppose (though not, as I think, correctly) Hooker intended, viz. ‘a divine expediency ;’ or than Mr. Matthew Arnold contends for, viz. ‘a true development.’ See ‘St. Paul and Protestantism,’ pp. 174-178.

(1 Cor. i. 10, xii. 24, 25, Rom. xii. 5); when it exhorted them to ‘be like-minded one towards another,’ for this end, that they might not only ‘with one mind,’ but also ‘with one mouth glorify God’ (Rom. xv. 5, 6; comp. Phil. i. 27, Heb. x. 25, Acts ii. 42). Once more, the Word of God did not mock at the poor and the unlearned when it taught them to ‘obey those who have,’ i.e. have rightly and legitimately, ‘the rule over them’ (Heb. xiii. 17), and again, to ‘know those who are over them in the Lord and admonish them’ (1 Thess. v. 12). No; it did not mock at them, when it bade them to observe and to do all these things. But is it not true that *we* mock at the great mass of the poor and ignorant when we put the Bible into their hands, to be their rule of life, and at the same time virtually tell them that there are no such things as *divisions* to be avoided; no such persons to be *known*, who can claim to *admonish*, to guide, to *rule*, to *watch for their souls*, as being *set over them in the Lord*;— except so far as they themselves (in their poverty) may *make*, or (in their ignorance) may *choose* such an one for themselves? I speak, you will observe, more particularly of the poor and the unlearned; because it is the will of God that they, and such as they, should ‘never cease out of the land,’ and because it is the will of Christ that to them, and to such as they, more especially the Gospel should be preached. But who is to be their preacher? And how can he preach except he be sent?¹ And who is to have authority to send him? A weighty question, my friends; one of

Our duty
towards the
poor and
unlearned.

¹ Rom. x. 15.

the weightiest that can be asked in this world, because if it is to receive no answer, then what limit can there be to divisions, and to confusion of every kind in the Church of Christ? And yet it is impossible to give any sufficient or satisfactory answer to it, until we have determined what is the right and true constitution of the Christian ministry. To that question, therefore, I shall next proceed. In the meantime I will only remind you what is the sum and substance of the remarks which have now been made. As we had been led from various considerations to conclude *à priori* that a definite system of the Christian ministry would be provided by the Divine wisdom and goodness; so we have been brought to the conclusion, *ex consequente*, that such a system must have been provided, and can be ascertained, and ought to be observed by us, in order that we may obey God's plain, repeated, and most strict command of Christian unity—a command in which the highest and most important interests of the poor and ignorant are especially concerned. At present, need I say? we are living in the most careless and most flagrant violation of that command. And what if it should be the will of God that the poor and ignorant should ere long become the instruments to take His vengeance upon those who are comparatively rich, and who are, or might be, better informed, unless we will seek to enter upon some sounder, more obedient, and more Scriptural course? And let us not be told that having gone on for so long in our present path, it is now hopeless to escape from it; or that bad as our existing separations are, we must be content to

make the best of them. Let us rather assure ourselves that no duration of time can give a prescriptive right to what is wrong in the sight of God. The whole history of the Jewish people, for upwards of a thousand years, is a continued proof that God is willing and waiting to be gracious to nations that will repent and walk in the ways which He has appointed for them to walk in ; and that if they will not do so, their degradation, if not their utter ruin, is eventually inevitable.

Second evil
consequence:
—Undue as-
sumption of
the right to
Ordain.

2. The second evil consequence of our present state, or, in other words, of our disregarding the principle of a uniform Christian ministry, is one which if consciously admitted, would involve a still graver offence against the divine law ; viz. the offence not of discord and division only, but of injustice, of usurpation. For is not this offence committed when the power of Ordination is assumed otherwise than according to the ‘authoritative example’ which we find in the New Testament, and to the unquestionable rule, and standing practice—for fifteen centuries, as we think, the invariable practice—of the universal Church, which assigns that power to the highest order of the threefold ministry ? Again and again the opponents of prelacy have been challenged to show the record of a single authentic and indisputable instance of non-episcopal ordination in the entire history of the Church *before the Reformation* ; and—must it not be said?—no such¹

¹ On the several *disputed* instances which have been produced—viz. (a) of Ischyras, ordained by Colluthus, but deposed; (b) of the abbot Daniel; (c) of the Goths and Scots; (d) of the power of the choreepiscopi;—see Bingham, book ii. c. iii. 7, and c. xiv. 6; Potter ‘On Church Gov.,’ p. 265 sq.; Hughes, in Hickes’ ‘Treatises,’ vol. iii. pp. 339–355;

instance has been produced. I will not undertake to say that no weight whatever is to be attached to the negative evidence which may be derived from the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, or of Polycarp to the Philippian Church; or again to the positive statements—such as they are—of Jerome at the end of the fourth, or of Eutychius, at the beginning of the tenth century; all of which have been referred to in my last lecture. But I cannot admit that these few particles of evidence, taken even at their highest estimate, deserve to be placed for a moment in comparison with the overwhelming mass of authority which is to be reckoned on the other side. I am also aware that *for more than a century after the Reformation*, i.e. down to the Restoration in 1660, even in England—to say nothing of this country, in which some of our leading reformers were not ordained at all—cases occurred in which presbyterian ordination, received abroad (where no Reformed bishops¹ were to be found), was recognised and admitted as sufficient by individual bishops, though not, I believe, by any law or action of the Church itself.

See above,
p. 161 sq.,
and p. 164
sqq.

Thorndike, 'Right of Church,' &c., vol. i. pp. 493–500; 'Irenicum,' pp. 379–382. See also Lightfoot, p. 230 sq.; and add the case of Liudger, the Saxon missionary, mentioned by Hardwick, 'Church Hist.', p. 26, note.

¹ In all such cases therefore there had not been any conscious or intentional preference of presbyterian ordination, and still less any inten-

tional opposition to Reformed episcopacy. Only more stress had been laid upon emancipation from papal error and usurpation than upon the strict observance of ceremonial regularity. This important consideration is too often overlooked. See an article by Principal Tulloch in the 'Contemporary Review,' January 1872. Compare below, p. 222, note 3.

But before we enter further upon the Church's witness in regard to this most solemn and important matter, which St. Chrysostom has justly called *τὸ κυριώτατον πάντων, the most sovereign instrument of all for maintaining the unity of the Church*,¹ let us enquire what is the guidance and authority concerning it which we may derive directly from the Word of God.

Scriptural
evidence
concerning
Ordination.

First, then, we see that the apostles ordained 'the seven,' supposed deacons (Acts vi. 6). Next, we see that the apostles Paul and Barnabas ordained presbyters (xiv. 23). Then, we see that Paul ordained Timothy *with*, but not² *by*, the laying on of the hands of the presbytery ; just as bishops now ordain presbyters, admitting other presbyters to lay on their hands simultaneously (2 Tim. i. 6, 1 Tim. iv. 14). Moreover, we see that Timothy himself, as supposed bishop of Ephesus, is empowered to ordain presbyters and deacons ; but we do not see that the Ephesian presbyters had any such power of themselves, however they might have been permitted to join in that solemn action (1 Tim. v. 22, iii. 1-10). In like manner we see that Titus, as supposed bishop of Crete, is empowered to ordain ;³ but we do not see that a Cretan presbytery had any such power (Tit. i. 5-7).

¹ In Ep. i. ad Tim., Hom. xvi. vol. xi. p. 691.

² Stillingfleet, 'Irenicum,' p. 271, has fallen into this mistake. Comp. p. 275, where he asks, 'If the presbytery had nothing to do, to what purpose were their hands laid upon him?' We answer, they had

something to do—in the way of dutiful concurrence and brotherly recognition, but not of primary action or direct authority—as they still have in our own ordinal. See the bishop of Salisbury's 'Bampton Lect.,' p. 209 sq.

³ But see above, p. 166, note.

Lastly—and this is the only other remaining instance of ordination recorded in the New Testament—we see that among five so-called ‘prophets and teachers’ at Antioch—Barnabas, Simeon or Niger, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul—the first and last were ordained, in consequence of a special revelation and command of the Holy Ghost to that effect, by the other three (Acts xiii. 1–3). But this was a case so special and extraordinary that they are said to have been ‘sent forth by the Holy Ghost’ (*Ibid.* 4), and St. Paul expressly declares that he was an ‘apostle,’ or one sent out, ‘*not* by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father’ (Gal. i. 1; comp. Acts xxvi. 17). The whole proceeding, I say, plainly belongs to those extraordinary ministrations in which the Holy Spirit, during the infancy of the Church, manifestly interposed so as to supply what was afterwards to be obtained by the regular action of the ordinary ministry. And may we not suppose that though the form of ordination, in order to mark its obligatory character, was not to be omitted even in a privileged case like that of St. Paul—as it had not been omitted by our Lord Himself in the no less privileged case of ‘the traitor’—there was a special intention in giving to the great *apostle of the Gentiles* a sanction which should be at once equally divine, and, so far as it was primary, altogether independent of the *apostolate of the Jews*, ‘the Twelve,’ as we know, being all of that nation?¹

¹ The election (by lot, before the day of Pentecost) of Matthias into the place of Judas, indicated the necessary continuation of the apostolic office. This appointment of Barnabas and Saul (who are thenceforth also called apostles), after James, the brother of John, had

Such, then, is the guidance which we receive from Scripture itself. There is no text which gives any direction or authority to presbyters to ordain; but direction and authority to that effect are given to two several individuals—to Timothy and to Titus—who we know had presbyters under them; and as, it appears, the authority in question was not given to presbyters, so neither, so far as we read in the New Testament, did they attempt to exercise it.

Nor is there, as I have already said, any well-authenticated instance in the history of the Church of their being allowed so to do till the time of the Reformation. Hooker—whom no one will accuse of speaking either ignorantly or at random—declares expressly: ‘No man is able to show either deacon or presbyter ordained by presbyters, and his ordination accounted lawful, in any ancient part of the Church.’¹

been slain by Herod (Acts xii. 2), indicated not only its necessary continuation, but its *necessary extension in number beyond twelve*:—thus pointing to an enlargement which would eventually be co-extensive with the universal episcopate. A fundamental act of this kind in the constitution of the Church, coupled as it was with the first great mission to the Gentiles, might seem to require the same direct sanction of divine authority, in the person of the Holy Spirit, as that which Christ Himself had exercised in His own person upon earth in the ap-

pointment of the original twelve, and as He afterwards exercised less directly (through lot) in the appointment of Matthias.

¹ Book vii. c. vi. sect. 5, vol. iii. p. 170. See also Overall, ‘Convoc. Book,’ pp. 150, 156; Pearson, Minor Theol. Works, i. pp. 274, 289; ii. p. 75, 232. Compare ‘Irenicum,’ p. 382, and Professor Lightfoot, p. 231: ‘As a general rule, even those writers who maintain a substantial identity in the offices of bishop and presbyter, reserve the power of ordaining to the former.’

And Gibbon, who may be trusted upon the matter of fact, of Gibbon thus writes concerning the age of Constantine, that is, the early part of the fourth century : ‘The Catholic Church was administered by the spiritual and legal jurisdiction of 1,800 bishops, of whom one thousand were seated in the Greek, and eight hundred in the Latin provinces of the empire ;’ and he adds, in his usual style of ill-disguised irreverence when he has occasion to speak of religious matters: ‘the bishops alone possessed the power of spiritual generation’ (c. xx.)—meaning that the ordination of clergy was confined exclusively to them.¹

How came it, then, to pass that this universal practice of the Church was first interrupted in some parts of Western Christendom (in the East it has never been interrupted) at the time of the Reformation ? It came to pass, if we are to believe no less an authority than Hallam, because ‘the foreign reformers had neither *the wish*, nor possibly the means, to preserve’ an episcopal ministry.² If by ‘foreign reformers’ our author meant, as most readers would suppose him to mean, the first authors and most illustrious champions

Episcopal
ordination
universally
observed till
time of the
Reforma-
tion.
Why inter-
rupted then.

¹ See Epiphanius *adv. Hær.*, lxxv. sect. 4, vol. i. p. 908, and St. Chrysostom on 1 Tim. iv. 14, vol. xi. p. 672. Even St. Jerome restricts the right of ordination to bishops. See above, p. 176. Blondel (p. 311 sq.) supposes that he is speaking there only with reference to his own time ; but this

is unreasonable. For if he had known that presbyters, even in the most ancient times, had been allowed to ordain, it is certain he would have said so in an argument where his purpose was to represent presbyters as equal to bishops.

² See ‘Const. Hist.’ vol. i. p. 137.

Wish of the
original
Protestants
to retain
Ordination
by bishops.

of the foreign Reformation, in other words, of original Protestantism, I am sorry to say, he has stated what is not correct. What their ‘means’ may have been is one thing ; what their ‘wishes’ were is another. And if their own words are to be trusted, it is certain that their ‘wishes’ were the very reverse of that which the words I have quoted would lead us to suppose. In the ‘Apology for the Confession of Augsburg,’ drawn up by Melancthon in 1531 (eleven years after the excommunication of Luther by the Pope), and adopted by the whole Protestant body, we read as follows :—

‘With respect to canonical (i.e. episcopal) ordination, we have often professed before the Diet, that it is our most *earnest wish and desire* (nos summâ voluntate cupere) to preserve the ecclesiastical polity and orders in the Church. . . But the bishops,’ that is, the unreformed papal bishops, ‘either compel our clergy to renounce and anathematise the doctrine which we have set forth in our confession, or they put them to death with the utmost cruelty and injustice. This is the reason which prevents our clergy from acknowledging these bishops. This is the cause why the canonical Church government, which we for our part *most anxiously wished* to preserve (nos magnopere cupiebamus conservare), has in some places ceased to exist.’¹ I admit there is evidence (especially in the ‘Smalcald Articles,’ and in the treatise ‘de Primatu Papæ,’ both drawn up in 1537) that the Lutheran party, smarting under continued provoca-

¹ Cap. vii. Hase, p. 204. The few lines further on in the same chapter. . .

tion, began to waver in their recognition of the abstract right of an episcopal ministry ; but I am also prepared to show that to the very close of Luther's life their prevailing sentiment was such as that which I have just exhibited. It is sufficient to refer to their *ultimatum*, presented to the elector of Wittenberg on January 14, 1545, and to the correspondence which took place at that time, when the struggle had been carried on between them and their opponents for nearly thirty years. They then wrote, *inter alia* : ' Nothing seems more likely to promote harmony, than *restoring to the bishops ordination*, which has always been accounted their chief, or single, function.'¹ And in the manifesto itself which bears the subscription of Luther, Melancthon, and five others, these words occur : ' We are as little disposed as any men to dissolve or weaken the constitution and government of the Church ; and it is our *anxious wish* (valdè optamus) that the bishops and their colleagues in that government would truly discharge the duties of their calling, in which case we offer them our obedience. . . In short, *there is no other way* to a holy concord than this, that the bishops should embrace the true doctrine of the Gospel, and the right use of the sacraments, and *that we should obey them as the governors of the Church, to which we pledge ourselves.*'² Luther died in the year after he had set his name to this remarkable document.

It is evident from these extracts that the greatest of the

¹ Seckendorf, 'Hist. Luth.', ii. p. 538. testimony of the prince of Anhalt, quoted in 'Irenicum,' p. 409.

² Ibid., p. 531. See also the

foreign reformers not only ‘wished’ (contrary to Hallam’s misrepresentation) to retain an episcopal ministry; but that they would not have considered themselves justified in ordaining as presbyters, if they could have obtained ordination for their adherents from a reformed episcopate. And for my own part, I have no doubt they would have regarded ordination, practised under the circumstances in which presbyterian ordination is now practised in this country, to be no less a usurpation than the papal usurpation against which they strove.

Contrary determination of the Westminster Assembly.

The difficulties which beset the members—especially the presbyterian members—of the Westminster Assembly in the following century were of another kind. Our presbyterian brethren at the present day are wont to boast of their zealous *Protestantism*; and they are apt to think that we ‘episcopalians’ fall short of them in this respect. But it is certain that their forefathers’ still accepted guides, the Westminster divines, departed much further than we have ever done from the principles maintained by the first and true *Protestants*—by Luther, by Melancthon, and even by Calvin¹

¹ See his treatise ‘De Necess. Reform. Eccles.’ 1544, quoted above, p. 139, and his ‘Letter to the King of Poland,’ 1554, Epist., p. 191. See also the narrative of the proposals made by him and Bullinger to King Edward VI. in 1549, in Strype’s ‘Life of Parker,’ i. p. 140; ‘Life of Cranmer,’ i. p. 296; and Bramhall’s Works, iii. p. 483. I am quite aware that views of a different character (such as his own irregular office and position rendered necessary) are to be found in other parts of Calvin’s works, especially those of an early date. See Cook’s ‘History of Reform.,’ ii. p. 380, note.

—on the question of the right constitution of the Christian ministry. In their zeal and impatience to destroy prelacy root and branch—as they solemnly pledged themselves to do, before they had begun to examine the Scriptural authority upon which it rests¹—they made apostles to be wholly extraordinary ministers ; they made Timothy and Titus to be wholly extraordinary ministers ; they made ‘ prophets ’ to be wholly extraordinary ministers. Thus they deprived themselves of every text, of every Scriptural example, upon which they could find the continuance of ordination. The divines of the Assembly, who were champions of Independency, were not slow to observe this, and they secretly rejoiced over the confusion which it caused among their presbyterian opponents, while it gave the utmost advantage to their own system, their own theory of ordination, which they proposed to derive not from above, but from below ; not from the institution of Christ, through His apostles, but from the will and choice of the congregation—a revolution of all previous principle and practice in the Church, for which the presbyterian divines, hostile as they were to all apostolical succession except in their own order, were not prepared. Nothing can, I had almost said, be more melancholy—nothing certainly can be more unsatisfactory to a Christian mind—than to see the manner in which the two parties of disputants quarrelled over the prey—the sacred privilege of ordination—of which they had combined to

¹ See above, Lecture i. p. 78.

despoil the rightful possessors. ‘After a keen and even stormy debate of fourteen days’ duration, the subject was laid aside, in compliance with the request of Lord Say, who favoured the Independents.’ This is the account of Dr. Hetherington,¹ a stanch Presbyterian, as derived from the journal of Lightfoot,² who, being a member of the Assembly, was present at the discussion.

Promise now required in presbyterian ordination.

It appears, then, that by presbyterian ordination, *except under circumstances of extreme necessity³ which may be thought to justify it*, bishops are deprived of their undoubted right—of their special prerogative in the Christian ministry—given to them not for their own pride or pleasure, but for the benefit of the Church upon the grounds which I explained in my first lecture. But what are the circumstances under which presbyterian ordination is now administered in this country? Only under a pledge upon the part of the recipient that he will do nothing ‘directly or indirectly’ to the prejudice or subversion of presbyterianism; and under a profession of his belief that it is ‘founded upon the Word

¹ ‘Hist. of the Westminster Assembly,’ 3rd edit., 1856, p. 175.

² First published in 1824. See pp. 114–131.

³ This plea has generally been admitted in favour of foreign Protestants by the great Anglican divines down to the time of the Savoy Conference, 1661–62; e.g. by Hooker, ‘E. P.,’ vii. 15; Field, book iii. p. 157; Mason, ‘Def. of

Protest.,’ Ordin., p. 139; Bishop Hall, vol. x. pp. 149–54, vol. xi. p. 21. And see the references in ‘Irenicum,’ p. 413. Since 1662 the Church of England, both by her own law and by the teaching of her best divines, has declined to be a party to a plea which has in fact ceased to be a real or sufficient one. Compare above, p. 213, note 1, and Bunsen’s ‘Church of Future,’ p. 23.

of God and agreeable thereto.¹ Now consider what this profession implies. To say that presbyterianism is ‘founded upon the Word of God and agreeable thereto,’ is to say that for fifteen centuries the universal Church misunderstood the Word of God, or did not care to follow it. Is there no responsibility incurred in making such an assertion, and in requiring others to make it? It may be made in ignorance; but can it be made with a due knowledge of the facts? and is not a due knowledge of the facts incumbent upon all who are to presume to make it, and still more upon all who require it to be made? It is certain that every Church of which we read in the New Testament was prelatical, and that no Church was presbyterian, unless we are to separate the apostles from the Churches which they founded, contrary to the universally accepted principle of the primitive Christians, and to the express teaching of the New Testament itself. It is equally certain that from the apostolic times to the sixteenth century every Church whose history is known to us is seen to have been prelatical; and that no Church throughout the world, whose history is known to us, is seen to have been presbyterian: and it is inconceivable that this should have been the case if presbyterianism were really founded upon the Word of God, or agreeable thereto; however the authors and promoters of it, provoked by papal corruptions or actuated by political discontent, may have persuaded themselves into this conviction; and some of

¹ See above, Lect. ii. p. 195 sq.

them, by degrees, into the conviction, still more monstrous, which condemned and sought to extirpate prelacy as contrary to God's Word. It is also certain, as I have shown above, that the first and ablest of the reformers, such as See pp. 218-
₂₂₀ Luther, Melancthon, and even Calvin, *drifted into presbyterianism from a supposed necessity, and not from choice*—a necessity which they openly avowed and regretted ; but is it to be conceived that they would have expressed such regret had they believed that system to be ‘founded upon the Word of God, and to be agreeable thereto’? Once more, if presbyterian ordination had been ‘founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto,’ can we conceive that it would have been disallowed, not only by the Church of Rome, and all the Churches of the East, but by the Church of England and its affiliated branches throughout the world?¹ Must we not ask, then, under such circumstances : Is it right, is it just, to require of young men entering upon the Christian ministry not only to accept a position which has no distinct Scriptural or historical basis, but *to bind themselves for ever to maintain a system which places them in virtual and irretrievable antagonism to an array of testimony and of authority, so vastly great and so nearly, if not absolutely, unanimous*? For what is there to be set on the other side ? Are we to be referred to the condition of continental presbyterianism—of Protestant Germany, or Holland, or Switzerland, or France—as giving either evidence of the past, or promise for the future,

¹ See above, Lect. ii. pp. 137-140.

sufficient to justify the course in question? If so, let us hear the testimony of one of the ablest German Protestants of modern times, who, while he was a devoted patriot, was also a most competent witness in all other respects. ‘Long has it been clear to me,’ wrote the late Baron Bunsen, ‘that in Protestant Germany *no Church exists*. Pious individuals there are, standing singly. But *the Church itself is fallen and is destroyed*. How many a one is silently longing after a better order of things, or, may be, asking how should the Church be built up again? *Many a one in despair has become Romanist.*’ Again, in another place, ‘Our Church *has yet to be built.*¹’ Such, by the confession of this unexceptionable witness, is the result of three centuries of non-episcopal Protestantism in the land which gave it birth. On the other hand, when Bunsen had to speak of episcopal England, he called it ‘the bulwark of religion and of civil liberty.’ And again, ‘One cannot cease to cling with heart and mind to that country, with which the freedom and the glory of the Reformation would perish.’²

I have dwelt long, and spoken strongly—not, I would hope, too strongly—upon this grave question; and, before I quit it, let me say, in regard to individuals now living, how earnestly I desire to be understood as condemning no man, as accusing no man. If there be a wrong committed, it is committed, I am sure, without any evil purpose or design—

¹ ‘Memoirs of Baron Bunsen,’ vol. i. p. 181 and p. 418. Similar testimonies might be given respecting the state of Protestantism in the other countries named.

² *Ibid.*, p. 464 and p. 354.

Testimony
of Baron
Bunsen as to
the state of
religion in
Germany.

inadvertently, unconsciously. And all I would plead for is, that we should endeavour to bring about amendment in that for which no man living is directly responsible, and of which —having now the option of what is better—no wise or competently learned judge, as I venture to think, can thoroughly approve. I would even admit that though *fieri non debuit, factum valet*; and accepting *the present*, as God Himself has manifestly accepted it, in its many fruits of love and of a lively faith, I would ask of God and man, *for the future*, in the words and in the spirit of the direction of St. Paul for the Church of Crete, and of the prayer of Bishop Andrewes for the Church of England¹—*ἐπιδιορθῶσαι τὰ λείποντα*, ‘to set in order *the things that are wanting*.’ (Tit. i. 5.)

Third evil
conse-
quence :—
Disuse of
Conforma-
tion.

A Scriptural
ordinance.

3. It has been frequently observed, that acts of aggression seldom stand alone, and that one false step commonly leads to another. This will be illustrated by the matter of which we have next to speak, viz. Confirmation. We read among the acts of the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638, ‘Concerning confirmation, seeing episcopacy is condemned, imposition of hands by bishops falleth to the ground.’² And yet, as we have shown that episcopacy is plainly Scriptural and apostolical, so we are prepared to show that the ordinance of confirmation rests upon the authority of Scripture, being mentioned in due order, after baptism, as among the fundamental ‘principles of the doctrine of Christ’ in Heb. vi. 1; and upon the practice of the apostles, as re-

¹ See Bishop Andrewes’ ‘Preces Privatae,’ p. 68; also pp. 96, 260.

² ‘Acts of General Assembly,’ p. 20.

corded concerning St. Peter and St. John in Acts viii. 14-17, and in Acts xix. 5, 6, concerning St. Paul. It is also attested by abundant evidence of ancient authors. I shall content myself with one quotation from St. Jerome, not only because it affords all-sufficient proof that, when he lived, confirmation was sanctioned and observed *universally* in the Church, but because it refutes what the same author has told us elsewhere respecting ordination, as if it were the single peculiar function of the episcopal office. The testimony appears in the course of a supposed dialogue between a Luciferian dissenter and an orthodox churchman; but this only brings out the fact which is stated on the one side, and admitted on the other, more strongly.

Universal in
the Church.
Testimony of
St. Jerome.

‘*Lucif.*—Know you not it is the practice of the Churches that to persons who have been baptized, the laying on of hands should be administered, and so the Holy Ghost invoked upon them? Do you ask *where* this is written? I answer, in the Acts of the Apostles. But even if it did not rest, as it does, upon the authority of Scripture, *the consentient practice of the whole Church to this effect would have the weight of a command.*

‘*Orthod.*—Such, I grant, is the custom of the Churches, that to those who have been baptized by presbyters and deacons at a distance from the larger cities, the bishop goes out for the purpose of administering the laying on of hands, and of invoking the gift of the Holy Ghost.’¹

¹ ‘Adv. Lucifer,’ c. viii. vol. ii. that same passage of the Acts, p. 164. A similar interpretation of above referred to, is given by St.

Observed by
Lutherans.
Testimony
of Bunsen.

No one who is competent to judge can doubt that confirmation is a very important ordinance, and would be calculated to do much good were it only of human institution.¹ Accordingly it is observed among Lutherans in many parts of Germany, even without a bishop. This appears, for instance, from a work which I just now quoted, the lately published ‘Memoirs of Baron Bunsen,’ who, though as far removed as any man from the least tincture of superstition, regarded the administration of this rite to the several members of his family, as they grew up, with the liveliest interest.² At the same time, that the practice among German Protestants is less general than it ought to be, or that not being episcopal it is not satisfactory at least to some, appears, from the complaint of the learned Lutheran Delitzsch in his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Hebrews vi. 2, where he asks, ‘Can we suppose that the apostolic writer of this Epistle would represent *the laying on*

Cyprian, Ep. lxxiii. c. ix.; and he adds, ‘The same is now practised also among us.’ See also St. Augustin, ‘De Trin.’ xv. 26. ‘In Epist. Joann.’ Tract., vi. 10. ‘De Bapt. adv. Don.’ iii. 21.

¹ On the rite of confirmation, as *symbolising unity*, being administered by bishops only, see the author’s Oxford Ramsden Sermon, for 1857, pp. 9–12: ‘It follows from what has been said, that if confirmation be neglected, it cannot

be otherwise but that schism will prevail. It cannot be otherwise but that *the nets will be broken*, and broken the more irreparably in proportion to the neglect.’ The prevalence of dissent in England, and of sectarianism in America, is there traced to that neglect as it existed in former years.

² See ‘Bunsen’s Memoirs,’ vol. i. pp. 315, 559 sq., 630, vol. ii. p. 17, note, 216, 352.

of hands, following after baptism, as among *the fundamentals of Christianity*, if it were not a holy ordinance and had not a divine promise annexed to it?' And then he adds : 'Unhappily, the Church of the present lacks many things in comparison with the Church of the first century ; but that deficiency will only become greater, if it (i.e. the Church of the present) forms thereon mere theories, not to say empty dreams.'¹

I hope I may be allowed to express a wish that our Presbyterian friends would lay these words to heart. I cannot but think that their ministers incur a very serious responsibility in withholding confirmation from the young. We strongly condemn in the Church of Rome the denying of the cup to the laity. I have no desire to press the two cases into a close comparison ; but while I admit that the latter cannot be censured too severely, I am utterly at a loss to excuse the former. If the testimony which a clergyman of North America, who was once a Presbyterian minister, has published respecting one of his own children, be verified only in a single case out of many hundreds, the result would suffice to justify the ordinance, irrespective of our obligation to observe it on other accounts. The narrative is a touching one, and I give it you simply as I find it in the father's own words :—

'One of those little ones—the first that was given me, and the first that I gave the Church—is now among them that sleep in Jesus. In the glow of childhood, in her fifteenth

Confirmation
ought not to
be withheld
from the
young.

¹ Quoted by the Bishop of Lincoln, *in loc.*

year, she expressed the usual desire to be confirmed at the next visitation of the bishop. As her father was beyond the seas, her friends advised her to await his return. But with the grace already given her, she urged her request very importunately. . . . She was accordingly confirmed, under the most gratifying appearances of sincerity and earnestness. A new measure of the Spirit evidently rested upon her from that hour ; she spoke in a sweeter tongue ; she led a more heavenly life ; not noisy but still, not ostentatious but retiring ; not even conscious was she of the impression made upon her heart and life, nor of that impression so sweetly reflected upon those around her, . . . And such a life of gentleness and holiness, and self-denial and prayer and humble usefulness, it has never been my lot to know in one so young. And God has rewarded it. Within a year from the time that she knelt under the bishop's hands, she entered joyfully into the rest for which she had been unconsciously maturing, and was "so blessed, she blessed the hand of death." ¹

Fourth
evil conse-
quence :—
Disuse
of other
catholic
ordinances.

4. To proceed with my argument. Closely allied, as consequences flowing, more or less directly, from the abandonment of the threefold ministry, are :

- a. The discontinuance of daily public worship.
- b. The renunciation of the catholic observance of the great fasts and festivals of the Church, such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, Passontide, Easter, Ascension, Whitsuntide.

¹ 'A Presbyterian Clergyman looking for the Church,' p. 95.

- c. The infrequency of administration of Holy Communion.
- d. The disallowal of Communion to the sick and dying.

I trace all these to abandonment of what I venture to call the legitimate ministry, because, wherever that abandonment has taken place, such results will be found to have ensued in a greater or less degree. There may appear at first sight to be no connexion between the threefold ministry and (for example) liturgical worship. But in truth the connexion is not far to seek. A system which claims to be more or less directly of divine institution, as compared with one which is of human origin, will naturally inspire greater reverence in all our dealing with divine things ; and consequently will lead us to shrink from approaching the Majesty of God, in His solemn worship, through the extemporaneous effusions of each individual minister. Again: a system of graduated authority, as compared with parity among ministers (as we see in a monarchy compared with a republic) will no less naturally lead to the same result : and in the minister himself, there can scarcely fail to be less respect for an office which he has received from his equals, and a lower estimate of the value of its functions, except so far as they depend upon the exercise of his own personal gifts. Now either of these principles, and still more both combined, may suffice to account for each of those four results, which I just now specified as effects of the abandonment of the threefold ministry.

It was far from being the intention of our reformers in this country that the daily public worship, which had been cele-

brated in the churches before the Reformation, should altogether cease. In the first Book of Discipline (1560), though they did not attempt to enforce any general rule upon the subject, yet they expressly contemplate that ‘some kirks might convene *every day*; some *twice*, some *thrice* in the week’ (c. xi.). And in ‘the short Sum’ of the same book, ‘for the Instruction of Ministers and Readers in their Office,’ they go further: ‘In towns we require (they say) *every day* either sermon or public prayers, with some reading of Scriptures.’ And again: ‘In every notable town we require that at the least once in the week *beside the Sunday*, the whole people convene to the preaching’ (c. x.). But when liturgical worship came to be superseded, as it did very soon under the new system, by prayer more or less extemporeaneous, the greater effort and the necessity for at least some preparation, which this latter practice would in almost all cases impose upon the minister—together with diminished regard for public prayer itself simply as such¹—produced the neglect which now, I believe, everywhere prevails of all stated provision for week-day services. The same causes—that is, on the one hand, lack of reverence, cloaking itself under the dread of superstition, in regard to the use of all things sacred and of the ministry itself; and, on the other hand, the greater difficulty in meeting the require-

Daily public
worship
ordered
by Scotch
reformers.

Origin of its
disuse.

¹ Dr. R. Lee testified, not long since, that the sermon had come to be regarded as ‘the grand centre’ of the whole service, ‘the other acts

being considered as mere *garnishing*.—*Reform of the Church of Scotland*, p. 11.

ments of all special occasions in the absence of prescribed liturgical forms—these causes, I say, have brought about also the other consequences to which I just now referred, viz. the non-observance of the great fasts and festivals;¹ the sad infrequency² ‘of the breaking of bread,’ so unlike the practice of the primitive Christians, as recorded in the New Testament; and the disallowal of it altogether except to those who can attend the public Communion on the rare occasions when it is administered. Far be it from us to boast as if the threefold ministry, wheresoever it is exercised, either among ourselves or elsewhere, could be acquitted of all deficiency in these respects. But this at least may be said with truth. Breathing as we do in this country an atmosphere which unhappily is most unfavourable to all such usages; still there is, I believe, no diocese in which the prediction of the Psalmist is not publicly fulfilled, that in the days of the Messiah ‘prayer should be made for Him continually, and daily should He be praised’ (Ps. lxxii. 15);

Other de-fects traced to the same cause.

¹ They were repudiated in the first ‘Book of Discipline’ (c. i.), which things, among other observances there condemned as ‘inventions of the Papists, because in God’s Scriptures they neither have commandment nor assurance, we judge them utterly to be abolished from this realm; affirming further that the obstinate maintainers and teachers of *such abominations* ought not to escape the punishment of the civil magistrate’ (!). The observance of

the great holidays is based upon Scriptural principles, as well as upon the authority of the Church. See above, p. 12.

² ‘I should hail with thankfulness a more frequent dispensation of the Holy Communion (in not a few parishes there is yet, shamelessly, but the single annual celebration)—say, quarterly, or at least three times a-year.’—Dr. John Wylie’s *Pastoral Reminiscences*, 1868, p. 324.

no diocese in which there is not at least one church wherein the lamp of God is trimmed, and the spiritual incense ascends from day to day, according to the practice of the Church, Jewish and Christian, from the beginning ; and where intercession is made for all the rest, and for the whole of Christ's body militant throughout the world. And if we compare episcopal London with presbyterian Edinburgh in this respect, what is the result ? In and around London (as appears from a statistical record for the present year, 1869) there are 588 churches, and of these there is *daily service* in more than one-fifth—that is, considerably more than 100 ; and *weekly administration of the Holy Communion* at nearly one-fourth of the same churches.¹ Who can tell how much the safety of the British Empire throughout the world may depend upon these acts of public worship in its great metropolis ? In Edinburgh, and even in Glasgow with its venerable Cathedral, among all the Presbyterian denominations, including the Established Church, there is not, I believe, a single place of worship which is opened daily ; or, as a rule, on any day but Sunday for public prayer.

Furthermore, with respect to the rarity of Holy Communion, I am tempted to observe that this is one of the many instances, in which there is practically a meeting of

¹ See 'Mackeson's Guide to the Churches of London and its Suburbs.' The same 'Guide' for 1872 represents a considerable increase

both in daily services and weekly Communions. See also the testimony of 'Pietas Londinensis,' 1712, in regard even to the last century.

extremes between popery and presbyterianism. In the present case I attribute the coincidence to the exaggeration of the true form and character of the Christian ministry and of its divinely ordered functions on the one hand ; and to their equally undue diminution and depreciation on the other. It is well known that the infrequency of lay communicating —rendered only more glaring by the constant private Masses of the priests—came, as a general practice, into the Church of Rome when the clergy had assumed ultra-sacerdotal powers ; and when all that was said or read in public worship was in a tongue not commonly understood. The same infrequency as regards not the people only but the ministers also came into Protestant communities when the sacred ministry had, in a great measure, denied itself, by sharing its sacred functions with lay presbyters ; and, as if secretly conscious of its inherent defects, it shrunk from the assertion of the true doctrine and practice of the Sacramental Ordinances of the Gospel ; till at length the public recital of the Lord's Prayer, and of the Catholic Creeds, and even the reading of the inspired volume itself, had been commonly discontinued.¹

The failures and deficiencies which I have been led to notice, not (God knows) as desiring to seek occasion for censure, but simply in order to carry out and complete the argument upon which we are engaged, are such as men would

Meeting
of the ex-
tremes—
popery and
presbytery.

¹ See Dr. Lee's 'Reform, &c.,' p. 11, 31, 80. It is but just to say, in regard to the first and last of the three particulars, mentioned above, that great improvement has taken

place of late years ; and perhaps the statement quoted, made as it was with reference to the earlier part of the present century, may have been somewhat exaggerated.

not readily acquiesce in, if they related to the comforts and accommodations of this present life. As it is, they relate to things of infinitely more importance. The question then occurs—Shall no effort be made to remedy or amend them, when their continuance cannot be otherwise than a cause to many of just dissatisfaction—it may be also to some of grave disaster? Again, be it remembered that we have been speaking only of a system, and its seen results, as testified by those who were themselves adherents of it.

Fifth evil
conse-
quence :—
Alienation
of endow-
ments from
purposes
intended
by the
donors.

5. There is, proceeding from the same cause, another consequence by which wrong—though doubtless, it must be said, legalised wrong—is committed, and that, in regard not only to things moral and spiritual, but material also. I will not refer to the building of churches by Episcopalians formerly, which are now held by Presbyterians; nor to the founding of exhibitions at the Universities for our advantage which are now applied to the benefit of Presbyterians; but I will ask what is the history of the foundation of some portion at least of those professorships—I mean the theological—which alone are now reserved to the Established Church, and from which, therefore, we are excluded? For example, of the four professorships in the faculty of divinity at the University of Aberdeen, three were founded under episcopacy, viz. in 1616, 1620, and 1674; and, we may reasonably infer, for episcopal purposes. Is it fair—is it right—that the chairs of these professorships¹ should be now used to instil into the minds

¹ Even the lay professors are still required (by the Act of 1853) to declare solemnly, that in the discharge of their office they will never,

of young candidates for the sacred ministry principles and sentiments more or less hostile to episcopacy, and consequently not only to us and to our system, but also *to the system of the Church of England?* Must it not be admitted that if we are wrong, and are in consequence deprived of the inheritance which our forefathers provided for us, then the Church of England is also wrong ; and if the Church of England is right, then are we also right ; or at least not so far wrong, that we deserve to be trampled on and despoiled ? Neither will it suffice to compare with spoliation such as that under which we suffer the case of the ante-Reformation endowments taken from the Church of Rome. The nation, as a body, had waked up to the conviction—a sound and just conviction—that the Church of Rome, whatever it might be and do in Italy, in this country was, and was exercising, not only a usurped but an anti-national authority ; which authority, therefore, and the instruments that upheld it, might and ought to be taken away. I need not say that nothing of the kind ever has been or could be alleged against ourselves.

6. I pass on to notice a sixth evil consequence which must always ensue more or less wherever separation abounds ; and which, as is only too obvious, prevails in this country to a lamentable extent—I allude to the evident waste of power and of the means of doing good, of all kinds, when in

Sixth evil
conse-
quence :
Waste of
ministerial
and other
resources.

directly or indirectly, teach anything opposed to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

a case where a single ministry would have sufficed, especially in country districts, four or five ministers are to be found, drawing the perplexed and bewildered people so many different ways;¹ while they themselves (a further unhappy consequence) are reduced in many instances to a state bordering upon penury,² without the possibility of making fit provision for their families ; so that their positions have come to be spoken of jestingly as ‘not *livings* but *starvings*.’ And to say the truth—though it may sound as if spoken with undue bitterness—it is only well that we should all be starved, like discordant jurymen on a trial for life and death, until we can bring ourselves to agree better than we now do upon the momentous verdict which, in a general sense, it is our office to deliver. Yes; if our mutual charity be *starved*, if we be *straitened*, as St. Paul speaks, *in our own bowels*, it is no more than just that we should be straitened also in the nourishment which they crave. We meet indeed with but little commiseration, and—must it not be said?—we deserve less.³

¹ ‘While there is in some places an enormous waste of Christian energy, owing to several sects overlapping and embarrassing each other, in others fields white unto the harvest are not touched by a single sickle.’ — *Report of Committee of Church of Scotland on Christian Life and Work*, presented at General Assembly, May 20, 1870.

² On the necessity of a due pro-

vision for the ministers of religion, see Barrow’s ‘Consecration Sermon,’ vol. i. p. 318.

³ Let the reader weigh well the statements made in the following testimony :—

‘While our country is over-churched at so great an expense, the *spiritual destitution of the land is year by year increasing*. As steadily as the churches grow in

7. To these considerations connected with a ministerial supply, which is excessive because beyond the requirements of the population, it may be added that the levelling of ranks among the clergy, consequent upon the discontinuance of the three orders, has involved the lowering of their social position, and the withdrawal of all those dignities and distinctions which, sometimes combining leisure (more or less) with emolument, were wont to be spoken of as ‘prizes’ in the Church. In other words, the system of presbyterian parity has a tendency to destroy, and has actually destroyed, not only the inducements, but also the opportunities of high clerical cultivation.¹ This at a time when learning, in at

Seventh
evil conse-
quence :—
Lowering of
status of the
clergy.

number, the wave of ignorance, and poverty, and irreligion rises higher and higher. In five-and-twenty years the churches have nearly doubled; and as one of the most natural functions of a church is the care of the poor, we might argue that poverty must have diminished in a corresponding ratio. Yet what is the fact? *The cost of maintaining the poor has increased from 300,000l. to 900,000l.*; and though it would be rash to assert that they were long ago adequately maintained, *they were yet in a better state than to-day*. More than a thousand schools have been added during that period, yet the unwelcome assertion stares us in the face that 90,000 children are growing up

without school instruction. Glasgow, with 196 churches, has a population outside all these churches of 130,000. Edinburgh, with 20 churches too many, has made public confession that its poor are unrelieved, and that 40,000 or 50,000 are living without any ordinances of religion. *These are awful facts to ponder—especially for Presbyterians.* For we do not hesitate to lay the blame of them very much at their door. Ask anyone for the explanation of this state of matters, and the answer is immediately given—THE DISSENSIONS OF THE CHURCHES.—*The Glasgow Herald*, April 1870.

¹ The want of a high-class indigenous theological literature in Scot-

least some portion of the clergy, is more than ever required, is a serious loss. And the same cause has led to a further evil, scarcely less to be deplored. I allude to the fact that the office of the ministry has come to be filled almost exclusively out of one, viz. the middle class, and not always by the most talented and most enterprising of that class, because to such at the present day openings more promising and more remunerative are presented in other lines of life. This is a result which operates in various ways most injuriously upon the whole body of society. It has commonly sent the younger sons of the Scottish gentry and aristocracy to seek their fortunes in India;¹ whereas, had they remained at home and become clergymen (as is the case very generally with persons of a corresponding condition in England), they might have done incalculable good by assisting to draw together all classes of the population throughout the country, and in some instances, at least, would doubtless have exhibited (as is seen in England among clergy of that class)

land has often been lamented by Presbyterians themselves. Much has been done to supply the defect by translations from German divines. And it must not be forgotten that the valuable 'Ante-Nicene Library' is due not only to the enterprise of Scottish publishers, but to the learning and scholarship of Scottish editors, though one of them till recently was located in England.

¹ Mr. Bright, in his speech at Edinburgh, November 3, 1868, ob-

served that 'nearly all Scotchmen know something about India, especially what are called the more comfortable and wealthier classes: for there is hardly one of their families which has not sent some members out to make their fortune in that distant country.' The cause of this will be found mainly, I believe, in the presbyterianism of this country, which has thus benefited India at the expense of the father-land.

the best examples of clerical efficiency, combined with clerical self-denial. Upon this and other accounts it is not too much to say that presbyterianism could never have produced that humblest, holiest specimen of an English parish priest, the high-born author of ‘The Country Parson.’¹ On the other hand, it would be desirable, perhaps, for the Church of England that a larger proportion of her clergy should be drawn from the middle class. The truth is that the Church, in order to do her work effectually, requires for her ministers men from all classes. She requires men of gentle blood, of refined taste, who will be able to speak at once with acceptance and with authority to the rich and powerful; but she also requires men who, from their own experience, will know how to enter into the wants and sympathise with the feelings of those whose lot is cast in different and even opposite circumstances. Happily, in this country there is no lack of admirable examples of the latter description; but for the former, it must be confessed, we have to look almost in vain. And yet, in a state of society in which the aristocratical element prevails so largely as it does amongst ourselves, it cannot be otherwise than a serious disadvantage when the ministers of religion have little or no direct personal connexion with that element.²

8. A further evil consequence, not yet fully developed,

¹ See Barnabas Oley’s Preface, c. v. 194 sq., 295. And upon the subject of this section generally, comp. Hooker, ‘E. P.,’ book vii. cc. xvi.—xxiv.

² See the valuable remarks in Burke’s ‘Reflections on the French Revolution.’ Works, vol. v. pp.

Eighth
evil conse-
quence :—
Difficulty
in dealing
with the
great ques-
tion of
national
education.

but threatening to become so more and more, the longer we remain in our present state, is the supposed necessity of dealing with education in such a way, that in order to render it national or general, we must make it *irreligious*, or at least must *separate it from religion*. That this is no idle fear has been made only too apparent by the bill upon that subject recently¹ introduced into the House of Lords. The distinguished member of the Government who brought forward that measure openly avowed its object in these words :—‘ It is proposed,’ he said, ‘ to cut off the connexion between the education in Scotland and the tenets of any religion taught there ;’ and he proceeded to ‘ appeal to the various religious bodies in this country to lay aside their differences and dissensions,’ in order to co-operate with the promoters of the bill in effecting such a result. I too have appealed—and I now appeal again—to our various religious bodies to lay aside their differences and dissensions, but with a very different aim. Doubtless it is better—and so far I agree with the resolutions of the Glasgow Committee of the 24th April last—doubtless it is better that our schools should continue denominational, than that they should become merely secular. But we in Scotland are fond of demanding the express authority of Scripture for what we do in all such matters. And where, I would ask, is the Scriptural authority for ‘denominationalism’? Is not the very term itself

¹ The reader will bear in mind that these lectures were written in the earlier part of 1869. The re-

marks above remain unchanged, as being equally applicable at the present moment, February 1872.

no better than a piece of hypocrisy ; used only because we are unwilling to call our various self-styled ‘Churches’ what St. Paul would have called them—so many schisms ? Be this, however, as it may, it is certain that the legislative proposal which we now deprecate would never have been entertained if statesmen had not grown impatient, only too naturally, of our ‘divisive courses ;’ and regarding them as a hopeless impediment in the way both of the necessary extension and improvement of education, they have resolved, after giving us full and repeated warning, to take the matter into their own hands.

It is now fifteen years ago since the first announcement of a bill, similar in its irreligious tendency to that which I just now alluded to, induced me to come forward and to found upon it an appeal similar to the appeal which I am making now ; and the circumstances for the most part being still the same, I may be allowed perhaps to repeat a small portion of the public address which I then delivered.¹

‘I am quite unable’—I then said—‘to express the forebodings I entertain respecting the momentous issues which are at stake in that measure’—the bill which was then before Parliament for the extension and amendment of our national education. ‘Only let me say, if it pass into a law, Satan, our great enemy, will have gained an advantage over

The author’s
sentiments
as expressed
in the year
1854.

¹ In the City Hall, Perth, May 4, 1854. What appears to the author the best solution of the religious difficulty in national education for

Scotland under existing circumstances was stated by him in his Charge for last year, 1871, pp. 12–14.

us, such as I dread to contemplate. He it is, I believe, who has been foremost in raising the cry of the neglect of education, and in persuading us to appeal to our civil rulers for the remedy of the evil ; not that he desires to see it remedied, but because he knows that any legislation which may be adopted, in deference to that discordant cry, will turn to his advantage ; will tend to weaken still further the foundations of religious faith ; to form a focus of still more bitter and unchristian animosity in every town and village throughout the land ; to poison the well-spring of truth and godliness, by separating the young from the superintendence of their pastor ; and, above all, to withdraw the keystone from the parochial system—that triumphal arch, against which his most fiendish spite will always be directed, because it records and contributes to maintain the victory of the Gospel over this and other Christian nations which he had formerly held in his own darkness and in the shadow of death.

‘ It is, I would humbly trust, in no other spirit than that of a Scottish patriot, of one who could weep over his adopted country when he sees that she is driving fast upon quicksands from which there can be no escape except with the wreck of her religious faith ; it is in no other spirit than this that I venture to raise my voice, and entreat that legislation may be suspended, or carried no further than is absolutely necessary in the meantime for the maintenance and efficiency of the present system, until some greater measure of unanimity can be obtained, upon sound and settled principles, agreeable to the Word of God, which will

warrant our legislation to be sound also. And where can we find these principles in our present divisions?¹ O my brethren ! let us think whether, while we have been disputing in mistaken zeal about the royalty of Christ, we have not rather plaited a crown of thorns, and put it upon His head ! And now, if under the malignant influence of these dissensions, we shall go on to take from Him His little ones, to take from Him those concerning whom He has said, “Of such is the kingdom of Heaven ;” take them from the bosom of His Church, and give them over to the charge of that cruel stepmother, the starveling world ; give them to be educated by a master of any religion, or of no religion ; if, I say, we shall do this, what punishment, think you, will suffice to expiate our guilt ? Will war, will famine, will

¹ I desire to submit to the reader's earnest attention the following propositions :—

(a) It may be doubted whether separation from a true branch of the Church is justifiable *under any circumstances* :—1. Because it is contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture ; and, 2. Because the evil which it inflicts is sure to be greater, *in the long run*, than any good which it can hope to do.

(b) All the separations of which we have experience appear to have arisen from causes quite insufficient.

(c) They have all proceeded upon the false assumption (in dependence upon which the precepts of Scrip-

ture against separation have been set aside), that if the Church to which we belong does, or suffers to be done, what *we think in our consciences* to be evil, we become responsible for the evil, unless we separate ; whereas all we are responsible for is, to endeavour, by every lawful means, to withstand and correct it.

(d) The Reformation in the sixteenth century was not a separation on the part of the Reformers, but a rejection of usurped authority.

It is believed that a conscientious examination of these propositions would go far, by God's help, to enable us to see our way out of our divisions.

pestilence, will any or all of these¹ be a sufficient chastisement for a nation which has been so signally blessed, and which, notwithstanding, shall be so heartless, so ungrateful, as to adopt a system of education of which the very heathen would be ashamed?

The real character of Christian education.

'There was a time when the people of this country would not have endured that even a Scottish parliament should presume to legislate in regard to things spiritual. But now, it would seem, the Church has no alternative but to abdicate her office in favour of whatever law it may please Parliament to impose:—so short-sighted has been the wisdom, and so calamitous the zeal, with which we have taken on us to support the throne and royalty of Christ by ways that are none of His. For is not the education of Christians a spiritual thing? Is it not of all things the most spiritual? Is not the Holy Spirit Himself the Author of it? Is it not He who alone can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, or of weak, wayward children, so as to make either the one or the other to become dutiful, humble, chaste, temperate, truthful, pious, loyal—and so to fulfil the end of all true education? Yes; though *one* has declared recently, on a public occasion, that he can find no authority in the Word of God for assigning to the clergy the superintendence of education, as if the same divine voice which

¹ The address was delivered at the time of the appointment of a day for national humiliation, in consequence of the recent visitation

of cholera, and of the Crimean War, in which we were then engaged.

commanded, "Feed my sheep," had not also commanded, "Feed my lambs ;" and though *another* has jeeringly remarked that he sees no mention of schools in the New Testament, but "the school of one Tyrannus ;" let us, my brethren, be persuaded that education is a *spiritual* thing. Yes ; and let us not go further than we have already gone in breaking up the foundations of our faith as a Christian people ; let us not require of our rulers in the State to do for us what our own divisions have rendered impossible to be done, except in a manner of which we shall soon find reason bitterly to repent ; let us be assured that all the difficulties of the educational question have arisen out of these divisions, and that the more we attempt to extricate ourselves, while we persist in this sinful course, the deeper we shall sink into false principles, the more surely shall we bring down upon our heads the divine displeasure. How many questions have these dissensions already opened, which heretofore we should have been ashamed to entertain ! How perplexing, and how melancholy, would be the report of all the arguments which have been urged upon the ministry of the day by the various deputations which have gone up from this country, each in turn endeavouring to impress upon them its own peculiar views ! What might not our own children say of us when they see us so much confused, or, what is worse, so violently opposed to each other, in regard to the system by which they are to be educated ! Would it not seem as if, while we are all so eager to promote their improvement, we ourselves have

need that one teach us again which be the first principles of our duty both in Church and State?'¹

[Eighteen years have elapsed since the foregoing words were spoken, and still we find ourselves in the same or even greater perplexities; and our governors can suggest to us nothing wiser, nothing more worthy of our dignity and responsibilities, as a Christian people, than that religion should be cast out as a bone to the dogs, to become an occasion of so many sectarian conflicts and dissensions as there are to be so-called boards of education throughout the land.]

Such, then, are some of the evil consequences which have obviously arisen out of our abandonment of the principle of religious unity. There are others still remaining to be specified which extend even more widely, and will require us to take a yet broader view.

9. Is it not then, I would venture to ask, a result deeply to be deplored by all its true members that the system of Christianity, in its practical aspects, is no longer seen in the character which its Divine Author intended it to bear—that

Ninth
evil conse-
quence:—
Practical
denial of the
character
of the
Church as
a corporate
institution.

1 'A Parochial Schoolmaster' lately wrote to the 'Edinburgh Courant' (May 17, 1869): 'The facts of Scripture are very imperfectly learnt in the Sunday school, for there is in general such a *keen competition* to secure attendance that the children speedily come to think that they *confer an obligation on their teachers* by attending, and

consequently consult their own inclinations in the matter of work.' I have reason to know that instances are not uncommon of children attending the Sunday schools of *two or three different denominations* on the same day with the view to some *material advantage* at the year's end.

is, a corporate character? Not only has the ‘one Body’ of Christ become a monster of many bodies, but the corporation, which He designed to institute, is, in a manner, individualised ; the ‘members in particular’ have come to be everything, and the Body nothing. The ‘communion of saints’ is still an article of the belief we profess, but is it an article of the life we lead? And what is the result? A large portion of the duty which the Scripture enjoins upon us as Christians is not only not performed by us, but the performance of it is rendered impossible. For example, the Scripture lays down as a first principle of our membership in Christ’s mystical Body—which it also teaches is *one* and undivided¹—that if one member suffer, all the members should suffer with it, or if one member be honoured, all the members should rejoice with it (1 Cor. xii. 26). But is this possible in our present state? Can the Established Churchman rejoice, when we Episcopalians prosper, or when the Free Church prospers, or when the United Presbyterians prosper? No! in reason and in conscience, we must mutually desire not the prosperity, but the overthrow of each other.² It is true, as individuals loving and esteeming each other in many instances, we desire to escape from this miserably false and unchristian conclusion, to which we are

Neglect of
relative
duties
unavoidable.

¹ 1 Cor. i. 13, xii. 12, 13, 27; Eph. i. 23, iv. 4, 5, 12, 13, v. 23, 30; Col. i. 24; Rom. xii. 5.

² I do not forget that St. Paul had grace to ‘rejoice’ that Christ was preached, though ‘of envy and

strife’ (Phil. i. 15–18); but there is no reason to suppose that the *strife* had led to formal separation, or that it involved more than want of due consideration and respect to St. Paul personally.

practically shut up by our respective circumstances ; and, conscience-smitten at the sight of the deformity of the condition to which we are reduced, and desiring to throw the best veil over it that we can, we are fain to have recourse to various devices—such as the Evangelical Alliance, and miscellaneous prayer meetings, and interchange of *pulpits* between ministers who never meet at the *same table* for Holy Communion—in order to soothe, as we would hope, the yearnings of our hearts, and to allay the thirstings of our spirit, as in a dry land where no water is. But the experience now of many years, utterly barren of all substantial fruit, may have sufficed to teach us that God will never suffer the devices of man to supply the place of His own ordinances ; while the inconsistency of our well-meant endeavours must have forced upon us the conviction at every turn that we were only throwing dust in each other's eyes : and some of us, it may be, in the consciousness of a participation in a self-imposed delusion, can scarcely refrain from smiling at each other; as Cicero supposes of the Roman augurs, when they chanced to meet. Again, there are duties—religious duties—which masters of a household owe to their servants, superiors to their dependents ; duties of example ; duties of teaching, of admonition, of warning ; duties of superintendence, of encouragement in their Christian course : but how can any of these be fully and adequately discharged, when the Christian course, in which they respectively walk, in regard to the public profession and practice of religion, is not the same ; when the course in

which the master walks is; perhaps, opposed to that in which the servant walks, and when the latter will be not unlikely to resent any interference upon the part of the former on that account? The disorganisation of domestic life, in too many instances, and especially of the wholesome relations between the upper and lower classes of society, consequent upon the prevalence of our religious divisions, is indeed one of the most bitter fruits of those divisions;¹ and akin to this is the diminished influence which, on the same account, and through fear of the mutual jealousies among us, ministers of the Gospel, as such, are, for the most part, allowed to exercise over all proceedings of a public character. Even in good works of a semi-sacred kind, such as the management of our infirmaries, the laity would seem to be unwilling, in some instances, to share with us the grave responsibility which they impose upon themselves; doubtless because they have seen reason to apprehend that greater embarrassment might arise out of our several differences than advantage from our common help. In this respect, at least, the disunion in England being comparatively less, the clergy there are still in a position to confer far greater benefits upon the whole community.

¹ See the conclusion of the Earl of Rosebery's inaugural address at the Philosophical Institution, November 4, 1871, in which he characterised class-separations as the crying evil of Scotland. 'A great page records the bloodless

and prosperous history of the Scottish union (with England); a greater page *lies vacant before us* on which to inscribe *a fairer union still*; i.e. of the classes of our population among themselves.

Position
of the
sovereign.

I must not quit this section of our present argument without alluding to the position which our sovereigns themselves are obliged to occupy in consequence of the disagreement between their Scotch and English subjects upon the matter which we are now considering. The ‘Confession of Faith’ would teach them, as a main part of their duty, ‘to take order that *unity* and peace be preserved in the Church.’¹ But what is one of the first acts which we impose upon them, as a condition of their being allowed to ascend the throne? We require them to take two different oaths, by which they promise equally to uphold two ecclesiastical systems which, as they now exist, are confessedly irreconcileable. Thus they find themselves yoked to two professions which have proved their discordancy by their historical antagonism. They are placed in circumstances which *tempt*—nay, to a certain extent, *compel*—them to ‘halt between two opinions.’ Such a predicament can scarcely fail to be injurious both to those who are placed in it, and to the mass of the people who are liable to be influenced by the example of their rulers.² It obviously tends to impair their confidence in the unity and consistency of divine truth; to foster the growth of indifferentism upon religious questions of other and, it may be, still more important, kinds; to weaken the principles of the unstable; to offend the consciences of the earnest-minded; and, at the

¹ See Westminster Confession, c. xxiii. 3. of the city is, such are all they that dwell therein.’—*Eccles.* x. 2. Comp.

² ‘What manner of man the ruler

Cic. ‘de Leg.,’ iii. 24.

same time, to undermine the loyalty of all by diminishing the sentiments of esteem and veneration in which the monarchy itself is held. The evil had been comparatively dormant till these latter years ; but the frequent visits to this country of our gracious Sovereign who now reigns, and her own considerate desire to adapt herself, as far as possible, to the feelings of all her subjects, and the supposed demands of her position, have combined to force it upon public notice, and to compel us to regard it as a stumbling-block which (for her sake and for our own), we should desire to remove. For we cannot escape out of this dilemma. If it be indeed a matter of indifference, then unquestionably we do wrong to make it a subject of such solemn obligation ; if it be not indifferent, then we do wrong to constrain our rulers virtually to regard it as if it were, by obliging them to become equal supporters of both systems.

And the same evil operates in a greater or less degree upon a large proportion of our population ; more especially of the upper classes, who have ties and associations which bind and often draw them to England. Take the case of a landed proprietor who possesses large estates in both countries. He finds one form of religion established in the one country, and a different form established in the other. What is he to do ? If he is an earnest and conscientious man, it is impossible that his sympathies should be with both those forms ; and not being bound, as the holder of the crown is, to be a *monstrum biforme* in religion—a Protestant of two denominations—it is not unlikely that he may choose to

Alienation
of classes
from each
other.

belong to neither ; as we have recently seen in the case of a young and promising nobleman, who being placed under such circumstances, preferred to go over to the Church of Rome.

Tenth
evil conse-
quence :—
Greater
prevalence
of unsound
doctrine.

10. I shall touch but slightly upon the evil effect which, as akin to the foregoing, I have next to specify ; not because it is less deplorable than others—for there is none which, in itself, is more injurious—but because among ourselves the experience of it has been less manifest than elsewhere ; I mean the more general prevalence of unsound and heretical opinion (together with exaggeration of some portions of the Truth and neglect or disparagement of others), which are wont to take place when the true framework of the ministry has been mutilated or renounced. No one who is acquainted with the history of continental Protestantism, especially at Geneva, in Holland, and in parts of Germany, can doubt that, following upon the disorganisation of the Church's ministry, and upon the concurrent disuse (partial or entire) of liturgical worship, there has arisen a laxity of doctrine which has wellnigh divested Christianity of all its distinctive truth.¹ That the same effect has not followed in this country, or followed in a far less degree, I must be allowed to think is due (through God's blessing) to the fact, that the operation of the same causes has been kept in check, if not

¹ A correspondent of the 'Times,' writing from Berlin, in August 1869, used these words : 'Three-fourths of all educated men in Germany are estranged from the dogmatic teaching of the Christian

creed. . . . Only a small fraction of the nation attends divine service. . . . Who that knows modern Germany would call it a *Christian land?*' Compare the testimony of Bunsen, as given above, p. 225.

by the presence among us, at least to some extent, of a reformed episcopal ministry, yet unquestionably by the powerful influence of the writings of the great English divines, and of the English Prayer Book ; which have never ceased to act, however secretly, yet with a most sure and salutary effect. In Germany, the same spirit of a learned and ingenious scepticism, which denied the personality of the poet Homer, has occupied itself in seeking to explain away the facts and testimonies upon which episcopacy rests, and in substituting for them theoretical fancies of its own invention. But it did not stop there. It has proceeded, in a not unnatural course, to undermine the authority of revelation, by attempting to disprove the genuineness and authenticity of large portions of Holy Scripture, including the life of our blessed Lord Himself. In this country, a community of situation and of interest has induced our presbyterian fellow-countrymen to avail themselves of the labours of that sceptical erudition in justifying their repudiation of the threefold ministry ; but it is matter for earnest congratulation that they have shrunk, for the most part, from the use of the more deeply poisoned weapons which the same armoury would have supplied ; and—be it spoken to our shame—it has been left to some, who have possessed every advantage, and are, or were, in communion with ourselves, to borrow and apply those weapons in the attacks which they have made upon the inspiration and veracity of the Word of God.

11. The next evil consequence which I have to name is, the disadvantage under which separation places every

Eleventh
evil conse-
quence :—

Impediments
in the way
of converting
the heathen,
and of re-
covering our
own lapsed
population.

Christian community in its endeavours to uphold and extend the Gospel. It is obvious that, if the uniformity of the Christian ministry which once existed could be restored, at least among the people of this island, the great work of Christian evangelisation might then be carried on by us, both at home and abroad, with far greater success than we can expect to meet with, disorganised and divided as we now are ; and consequently disentitled to receive, so largely as we might otherwise hope to do in such a cause, the divine blessing, without which our best efforts can be of no avail. At home, for example, the report issued in the early part of last year (February 1868) concerning the miserable condition of the poor in Edinburgh, while it confessed inability to discover ‘which is the first link in the chain of causation,’ yet did, in fact, suggest this as the one great obstacle that stood in the way of effectually grappling with the mass of evil which had been found to exist. And accordingly, in an able article which appeared in the ‘Scotsman’ newspaper upon that report, it was observed that ‘the remedial agencies proposed, though more or less in practice at present, do not answer their purpose, because they exist in operation *without co-operation*. They do not *work together* for good. The supreme and central remedial measure aimed at in the present instance is the concentration of our isolated forces of beneficence, which are now in so monstrous and mischievous a degree clashing with, and counteracting or neutralising each other—where indeed they do not *augment* the evils they were meant to mitigate—in a chaos of ill-directed,

and therefore often fruitless, endeavour. Order is Heaven's first law, and economy is like unto it. Our charities being confessedly *disorderly* and wasteful, how can we expect them to be *blessed*? . . . It is one of the chief curses of our present *no system* that, by the distrust which attends it, the springs of charitable giving and doing are dried up at their very sources.' Such is a specimen of our condition at home, according to a testimony which is all the more valuable because it is given not from any religious or ecclesiastical point of view. I may add, that the before-named valuable and trustworthy report represents what it calls 'the lapsed classes in Edinburgh' as constituting more than one-fourth of the entire population. It is thus that the broken law of unity still continues to avenge itself by introducing a Babel-like confusion, which, even when we would be doing good, baffles and defeats our aims!¹

Abroad, the interesting address, delivered shortly afterwards in the General Assembly by Dr. Norman McLeod, upon his return from India, afforded only another evidence, in addition to countless testimonies before given to the same effect;²

¹ 'The multiplication of sects among us has multiplied the appliances for developing the activity of professing Christians, but has *not only not diminished* the proportion of practical heathen to the members of Churches among us, but *is at the present moment one of the chief barriers to the proper application of Christian power to the work of reclaiming such*

heathen.'—*Report of Committee on Christian Life and Work*, presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May 20, 1870. Compare above, p. 239 sq., note 3.

² See the author's 'Discourse on Scottish Reformation,' Append., c. vi. And add Speech of Bishop of Bombay, 'Colonial Church Chronicle,' March 1872, p. 101.

Dr. N.
McLeod on
India.

viz. that nothing acts as a greater hindrance in missionary enterprise than conflicting systems among the missionaries. Accordingly, he denounced denominationalism. He would have us teach the people of India that what they want—what they must have—is a Church of India. But with what face can we, Scotch and English, presume—and upon what principles can we attempt—to teach them this, so long as we ourselves have a Church of England, and a Church of Scotland, which are not at one, which are dissenters—denominationalists—to each other?

Bishop Piers
Claughton of
Colombo.

I have said that Dr. N. McLeod's testimony is only one of many to the same effect. A sermon upon 'The Christian Ministry and the Controversies concerning it,' preached (1867) in the Cathedral of Colombo, by the bishop of that see, now Archdeacon of London, contains the following passage, which, from the allusion in the first words, though addressed to others so many thousand miles away, would seem to speak in an especial manner to ourselves :—

'Happily, the question between our Scottish brethren and ourselves is daily becoming more simple and plain, cleared from the difficulties which beset it in the days of our fathers. One by one causes of difference have melted away, or are being canvassed in an impartial spirit with a view to their just settlement.' And then apparently addressing Presbyterians and others who were not of his own flock—for the occasion being a Christmas ordination had probably attracted many such, and, as it would seem, some of the heathen also—the bishop proceeds :—'What we wish is

that you should understand the stress laid in Scripture on the unity of God's people—that you should not accept a mere consent to meet amicably now and then for actual communion in Christ. And here, in the face of the unconverted heathen, I tell you plainly, as one put in charge with the Gospel, and I do not say it for the first time—*you Christians must get rid of your manifold and needless divisions, before you have so much as a reason to look for success in your endeavours to convince those heathen of the truth of your own religion'*¹ (p. 6).

Such is a sample of the testimonies which have come to us from the far-distant East. Let us compare with them the evidence which we have also received from the far-distant West, and among a population whose condition, though nominally Christian, would appear to be almost more alien from genuine Christianity than heathenism itself. The friends of Dr. Stephen Elliot, who was bishop of Georgia, a southern State of North America, for more than twenty-five years, and who died in December 1866, have since published a volume of his admirable sermons, one of which, written in the last year of his life, and therefore with all the benefit of his ripe experience, is upon the text of Hosea viii. 11:—‘Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars

¹ This last statement has received a remarkable confirmation from the leader of the Indian Theists—Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen—who, in a most interesting address which he delivered at a public meeting in

London, April 1870, complained that ‘so many different doctrines and rituals were presented to the Hindoo by the missionaries of differing Churches, that he was quite bewildered and confounded by them.’

shall be unto him to sin.' The solemn warnings which that sermon contains would make it very valuable if it were reprinted and circulated in this country. After remarking that 'the tendency of the times is to strike at everything positive and distinctive—to put all systems, all institutions, nay, all men, upon an ignoble level' (p. 166); and after tracing the consequences of Jeroboam's politic (as it seemed) and plausible disobedience to God's express command in separating himself and his people from the one appointed temple and altar and priesthood at Jerusalem—consequences which appeared first in a multiplicity of altars throughout the land of Israel, until at length, under Ahab and Jezebel and Joram, idolatry, the foulest and most degrading, usurped the place of the worship of Jehovah—it thus proceeds :—

' And are we not in this country passing through precisely this experience? . . . Are we not dividing and subdividing into innumerable sects, each one setting up its own altar, and each altar further and still further removed from the doctrine and discipline of Christ? . . . Has not the progress been rapidly downward, striking in turn at everything distinctive in doctrine, and bringing in arrangements of religious worship more and more radical? Is not God manifesting the law of His government by permitting these altars to multiply, and, as they multiply, to be more and more irregular and profane? . . . Look at the rapid deterioration of religion in many parts of the United States, once the most rigid and devout! Look at the doctrines which are now publicly proclaimed throughout the land, which are gathering

disciples, which are forming sects ; doctrines of devils, fit only for execration and condemnation ! . . . “ Ephraim is making many altars to sin ;” . . . and true to the principle of its action, his law is being fast made the banner under which idols of every hue and shape—idols of imagination, of sentiment, of will, of pride, of lust—are to take the place of Christ and His Church. And what is worse, Christians seem blinded to the condition of things, and are comforting themselves with the idea that religion is advancing through the land, when it is really fast running into the foulest corruption’ (p. 169 sq.).

12. One more evil consequence, requiring us to take a large and comprehensive view, if we would pay due regard not only to our spiritual and religious, but also to our secular and political interests, consists in the advantage which our establishment of two different and discordant forms of Protestantism affords to the Church of Rome. I am sorry that it should be necessary to speak of any Church as if we were justified in regarding it with suspicion and distrust, and still more, as if it were an adversary, whom it is our duty to withstand. But such, unhappily, is our case towards the Church of Rome ; and not ours only, but the case of every other Church that refuses to submit to her despotic sway. She must be resolutely withheld, because she considers it her duty to press forward that sway wherever she can do so with the least prospect of success. And what have we to oppose to that aggressive spirit? Not long since I saw it stated in a public journal that, whereas half a century ago,

Twelfth
evil conse-
quence:—
Advantage
given to
popery and
volun-
taryism.

the number of Roman Catholic clergy in Great Britain did not amount to 300, it now exceeds 1,500; being considerably more than the number of ministers of the Established Church in Scotland. And all that force of Romanist clergy have been trained, be it remembered, *upon one and the same system*. But how have we been trained? To fight against each other. Look at the Catechism, sanctioned and put forth by the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1847. It has, it is true, its ‘anti-papal testimony;’ but it has also what it calls its ‘anti-prelatical testimony.’ Or if not trained to fight against each other, we learn, I had almost said, to do worse—to dissemble and slur over differences which, nevertheless, so long as they exist, must be sufficient to keep us from all effectual co-operation. It is not my avowal, but the avowal of the late Dr. Robert Lee, that the two Established Churches of this island ‘as now existing, are rather antagonists than allies.’¹ Nor could this well be otherwise, when the establishment of one has been founded upon the disestablishment of that which was, and is, in communion with the other. How, then, are they to cease to be antagonists and to become allies? **ONLY BY THE DISCOVERY AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE TRUTH.** I have done my best—not hastily, not superficially, but after full and patient enquiry—to ascertain the truth in regard to the main point of difference which now separates the two Church establishments; and, until it shall be shown by a more laborious and more competent enquirer that I have fallen into error, I shall

¹ ‘Reform of the Church of Scotland,’ p. 41.

venture to think that I have demonstrated to the satisfaction of every fair and candid mind what the truth in question really is. I am equally prepared to prove that the true system of Christianity, as revealed to us for our guidance in the Word of God is, what—in opposition to *popery* from one point of view, and to *voluntaryism* from another—may best be called *the national system*; that is, the system by which each nation orders and establishes its own Church, as in the sight of God (who has given to each its own language, its own character, its own bounds of habitation), not in a spirit of innovation, or of self-sufficiency, but in accordance with the Scriptures, the faith, and ministry, everywhere received among Christians, when the Church was one, and before the universal Roman Empire, providentially formed with the view to the extension of Christianity, had been, with the view to its consolidation, no less providentially broken up. By a process of argument similar to that which has been used in demonstration of the threefold ministry, it may be shown that this national system, as it had been foretold by God's ancient prophets long before,¹ so in the fulness of time it was actually accomplished. It may be shown that the command for the evangelisation of the world was 'to baptize'—not individuals merely, but 'all the nations' as such,²—and that what Christ 'commanded,' has been 'observed.' *Wherever Christianity was received, there it*

National
Christianity
the true
system.

Proved from
History and
Scripture

¹ See Isaiah xlix. 22, 23; lii. 15; lx. 10–12, 16. Ps. ii. 8–12; lxxii. 11.

² Matt. xxviii. 19.

became national; just as, wherever it became national, there it had previously become episcopal. It may be shown that, confessing our belief (as the Scripture teaches) in the session of Christ ‘at the right hand of God,’ we thereby intend that ‘all power has been given to Him in heaven and in earth;’¹ we virtually confess no less than this, that ‘by Him’ and for Him ‘kings reign and princes decree justice;’² in other words, we virtually confess not only *the headship of Christ over His Church*, but *His acquired right to all national and political power*, to be administered in His name by the secular magistrate, as all ecclesiastical power is, or ought to be, administered in His name by the spiritual magistrate.³ Nor is there in these solemn truths anything at variance with the word of Christ Himself (if only it be not, as too often it is, misinterpreted), when He declared to Pilate, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’ That is, not received, or derived ‘from⁴ this world;’ no, not ‘from hence,’ as He presently repeats, thus explaining His meaning in the end of the same verse (John xviii. 36); but ‘here, in this world,’ as St. Augustin declares (and so ‘of this world,’ in a most

St. John
xviii. 36, as
explained by
St. Augustin
in loc.

¹ Ps. cx. 1. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. i. 20. Col. iii. 1. Heb. i. 3; x. 12. Matt. xxviii. 18. See also Dan. vii. 13, 14. Rev. i. 5; xvii. 14; xi. 15.

² Prov. viii. 15.

³ That is, in Scriptural language, the two powers, of the sword and of the keys. See Rom. xiii. 1-6.

¹ Pet. ii. 13, 14. Eph. i. 19-22. Heb. xiii. 7, 8, 17. ¹ Thess. v. 12. Phil. ii. 29, 30.

⁴ The preposition in the Greek indicates this. To express what we commonly understand by ‘of this world,’ the genitive case would have been used without a preposition.

real and true sense), ‘is His kingdom, and all the powers of the world, by divine right, are subject to it.’¹

And yet, while all this can be shown, as I believe, to be the very true teaching of the Word of God, I am far from maintaining that circumstances can never arise in which fidelity to her Divine Bridegroom may not *provoke*, nay, *compel* the Church to sue for a divorce from her earthly bridegroom.

But this I do say, and would most steadfastly maintain—being taught to do so by the sure voice of prophecy—Woe to the State which so treats its Church as to force her to such a course ! Woe to the nation, that having been once baptized, tears, as it were, the Cross from off its forehead and repudiates its acceptance of Christ as its King !²

With these convictions, I confess, I am not much disposed to listen to calculations as to what the voluntary system may, or may not, be able to effect. I consider that God Himself has spoken upon the point, and that the national system alone is in accordance with His will ; as shown, not only by the teaching of His Word, but also *by the working of His providence, which has once wrought for Christianity its establishment throughout the civilised world.* But if nations

Success of
voluntary
system
delusory.

¹ This is also the interpretation of St. Chrysostom and of Theophylact. See the author's Perth Lecture, 1854, p. 28.

² ‘The nation and kingdom that will not serve *thee* (the Church) shall perish ; yea, those nations shall be

utterly wasted.’—Isaiah ix. 12. ‘Be wise now therefore, O ye kings. . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.’—Ps. ii. 10-12.

take a retrograde course ; if they so far fall away as to prove themselves unworthy of this better condition designed for them by God ; then by all means let them make the best of the alternative that remains to them—the alternative of voluntaryism. Only let them not vaunt themselves in so doing ; let them not boast as if they had chosen the better part when they have fallen back upon the worse ; and let them not expect that the divine blessing will still rest upon them no less than if they had dutifully adhered to the divine will. No !—and meanwhile, as members of the Church, let us feel assured that the present successes, which we are called upon to admire¹ in the working of the voluntary system, whether in this country or elsewhere, are by no means a conclusive proof, either of the sufficiency of the system itself, or of the goodness of the cause in behalf of which it is exerted. Such successes will be often due in a great degree to local or occasional circumstances ; and, so soon as the established system is set aside, one great incentive to the activity of voluntaryism, which arises out of a spirit of opposition to the power and prerogatives bestowed upon its rival, will be withdrawn. But if we are to be told that a cause must necessarily be a good one which is attended with such appearances of success, then, I would ask, what effects have ever been produced more extraordinary, or

¹ On the other hand, we have received warning from several of the American bishops when they visited this country, not to be led away by the promises of a system which their own experience had found to be delusive.

more admirable, than those glorious specimens of ecclesiastical architecture—our abbeys and cathedral churches—erected under the influence of the papal system, when the corruptions of that system were at their greatest height? Or, again, what success was apparently ever greater than that of the sword, when drawn in behalf of the cause of the false prophet, Mahomet? Nor is the result in such cases difficult to account for. Error can appeal to motives more powerful, at least for a time, than those which the truth appeals to. Error will not scruple to make use of instruments which the truth would be unwilling or ashamed to employ.

The system, then, of a national established Church, or, in other words, of a union between the Church and the State of every nation professing to be Christian—this I believe to be the true, the only true and divinely intended system; and *this*, as regards ourselves, and the highly favoured nation to which it is our privilege to belong, popery and voluntaryism are now combining to destroy. And if our opposing front is to continue still divided, and at variance, between prelacy and presbyterianism, is there not too much reason to fear that, eventually, they will succeed? And when the national system has given way, it is idle to expect that the system of voluntaryism, with *no bond of union in itself*, will long be able to withstand the spurious but attractive *unity of the Church of Rome*. The secularisation of a State which has once been Christian can never be regarded without regret by a Christian mind. I say nothing of the circumstances which may be thought to justify it in a country situated as

Union of
Church and
State, why
endangered.

See above,
p. 4 and p.
225.

Ireland is (1869) at the present time. But believing as I do that the measures which we are now witnessing would never have been proposed if there had been no such difference as unhappily exists between the two chief bodies of Protestants—Episcopalians and Presbyterians—in that country, I cannot but see in the threatened legislation a solemn warning which we ourselves, whether Englishmen or Scotchmen, should lay to heart.

Opinion of
Macaulay—
in what
sense to be
received.

I do not forget the expressed opinion of Lord Macaulay, that the union accomplished in 1707 between England and Scotland has been a great blessing to both countries, ‘because, in constituting one State, it left two Churches.’¹ And I grant that there is a sense in which that sentiment is true. Assuming that the religious profession of a majority of the people was fairly represented in 1690 by the disestablishment of episcopacy and establishment of presbyterianism in its room—an assumption, however, which a strict investigation of the facts of the case will scarcely justify²—but supposing this, which is the popular belief, it certainly would have been most undesirable that any attempt should have been made to force upon Scotland the reacceptance of episcopacy as a condition of the union between the two countries. But that the circumstances were such as to require the establishment of ‘two Churches,’ unlike each other, in the same State—this, so far from having proved a

¹ ‘Hist. of England,’ vol. iv. p. 202 sq.; and comp. Sage’s ‘Presbytery Examined,’ pp. 312–333.

² See Burton’s ‘Hist.,’ vol. ii. p.

great blessing, must be acknowledged to have been the very reverse by all who have at heart the interests of true religion, and who also desire the continuance of the union between Church and State. For what—after little more than a century and a half—has been the result, as we now see it sufficiently developed, of this *ecclesiastical biformity* within the same kingdom? It started with the anomaly that Scotch Presbyterians were thenceforth to be admitted¹ to legislate for the Episcopal Church of England, and English Episcopalian to legislate for the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Hence churchmen and dissenters—both being capable of either description, according to the point of view from which they were regarded—would be equally at a loss to maintain their true character; and the barrier was broken down which had hitherto fenced ecclesiastical legislation, in respect to the Church establishments of both countries, from illegitimate intrusion. It is easy to see that by such a policy something more than *the thin end of the wedge* was inserted; whereby all the subsequent breaches into the constitution, upon its ecclesiastical side, have followed logically.

Such, then, and so many are the evil consequences which flow more or less directly from the abandonment of the one constitution which was once universal in the ministry of the

Forenamed
evil conse-
quences
traced to
their origin.

¹ During the operation of the penal laws against Scottish episcopacy in the last century, none but Presbyterians or members of the *qualified* episcopal congregations, who were virtually Independents, could be elected from Scotland to serve in Parliament.

'Satanical principle and devices.'

Church, and which (as we have seen reason to conclude) was designed by Christ to be maintained in all countries and at all times. Can we doubt that results so injurious to the interests of religion have been caused through the agency of that evil spirit who is represented in Scripture as the great enemy of God and man? ‘Divide et impera’—DIVIDE AND GOVERN!—such has ever been his master principle, his most successful policy. Divide man from his Maker; divide fellow-Christians, Church against Church, altar against altar; divide class from class, rich and poor. Finally, divide Church and State. Yes; in opposition to the first great principle¹ of Christ, our Friend and Saviour, ‘UNITE AND CONQUER’—such has been from the beginning the principle and the policy of our enemy and destroyer. St. Paul could say, and say truly, ‘We are not ignorant of his devices.’ Can the same be said now? What other explanation can be given of the many popular apologies which we hear for continuance in our present state, but that they are devices of Satan, and that they who use them, use them in ignorance of their true character? Is it not, for instance, a melancholy proof of such ignorance when a man fancies that he can be *more edified* in breaking the intended order, and oftentimes, the express command of Christ, than in keeping it? When he flatters himself that because the Gospel is *spiritual*, therefore he may dispense with its *forms*, its *laws* and *ordinances*; because the *Scriptures* are above all to be read and searched, therefore the *Church* is not to be

¹ See Bishop Andrewes' sixth serm. on 'Resurrection,' vol. ii. p. 279 sq.

heard or known ; because all Christians are in a certain sense *priests*, as in a certain sense also they are all kings, therefore a duly ordained *ministry* has no proper claim to his submission and regard ; because religion is a matter between *God and every man's conscience*, therefore it is not a matter as between *man and his fellow-men* ; because every man is to obey his own *conscience*, therefore the guidance or supposed guidance of conscience, however ignorant and ill-informed, is to suffice to bar *all other guidance*, however legitimate and however wise and enlightened ; because *offences must needs come*, and the offence of schism among the rest, therefore there is *no such sin as schism*, or if there be, it is needless or impossible to ascertain *in what it consists, or how it is to be avoided*. What sophistry ! What delusion ! What half-truth—always better for the purposes of Satan than entire falsehood ! What ignorance of his devices is there in all this ! What appeal to the natural pride of man's heart ! What pandering to his envy, jealousy, distrust of others—to his own self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-love ! What renunciation of all meekness and humility ! Or again, when pleading, as I am pleading in these lectures, for one uniform constitution in the ministry of the Church, we are met with the taunt, instead of argument, that our position is a narrow and an antiquated one—as if the prescribed way that leadeth unto life were not also narrow !—and that presbyterianism is valuable and must be maintained, if on no other account yet on this—because it serves as a standing protest against a position so illiberal ;—can there be

conceived a device of Satan more similar to that with which he tempted our first parents, when, under a promise of extended knowledge, he induced them to disobey God's plain command?

Summing up
of the whole
argument.

First head.

For, to sum up now the argument upon which we have been engaged, it will stand thus:—

I. We find, in the first place, that a definite and orderly organisation of the Christian ministry was to have been expected *à priori*, from various considerations:—

1. From the corporate idea and delineation of the Church as revealed in Scripture.

2. From the analogy of order in the external world.

3. From the correspondence between the Christian Church and the Jewish, in which the system of a threefold ministry was prescribed by God.

4. From the mystical analogy between such a ministry and the divine object of Christian worship.

5. From the analogy of the form of government which is acknowledged to be the best for civil society.

6. From the sacred character and high importance of the functions to be performed by the said ministry.

Second
head.

II. We find, in the second place, concerning the threefold or episcopal ministry:—

1. That it is plainly Scriptural and apostolical.

2. That it was universal in the Church from the earliest period at which it could be reasonably expected to be fully organised, down to the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

3. That it is still universal in the East, and, for the most part, also in the West, either in a reformed or unreformed condition.

4. That in either case, both before and since the Reformation, it has ever been regarded as essential to the complete constitution of a Christian Church.

III. We find, in the third place, that, wherever the said ^{Third head.} form of ministry has been discontinued, there sundry evil consequences have ensued more or less directly ; for instance :—

1. A breach of unity, which such discontinuance has involved, contrary to the express command of God, and a gradually increasing indifference to the sin of schism.

2. A usurpation of the rights and powers of the episcopal ministry, especially of the power of Ordination, by other bodies, whose credentials are at best open to question.

3. A withholding of the ordinance of Confirmation from the young.

4. A discontinuance of other catholic ordinances, such as daily public worship, frequent Communion, observance of the great Christian fasts and festivals, administration of Communion to the sick and dying.

5. An appropriation of ecclesiastical and especially professorial endowments to purposes at variance with those for which they were bestowed.

6. A waste of ministerial power and of charitable resources, of all kinds consequent upon separation.

7. A lowering of the social position of the clergy, and a loss of means and opportunities for theological study.

8. A temptation to have recourse to systems of education which, in order to be general or national, must be, more or less, irreligious.

But besides these we find other consequences of a still wider and more disastrous scope ; viz. :—

9. A practical denial of the true character of the Church as a corporate institution ; and, arising therefrom, a neglect of relative duties, and an interference with the beneficial action of the several classes of society one towards another.

10. A greater and more unrestrained prevalence of false or unsound doctrine.

11. An increase of difficulty thrown in the way of evangelising the heathen, and of converting the lapsed masses of our own population both at home and abroad.

12. Advantage given to the papal system and to the principle of voluntaryism, in opposition to the true system of national Christianity, and to the principle of the union of Church and State.

Scotch
'Episco-
pilians'—
their fidelity
to principle ;

This, then, is what we *find*, upon the question before us ; and this, I verily believe, is the *finding* of the truth itself. It is for reasons such as these, and not from any foolish and bigoted adherence to a weak and indefensible position, that a large, and not the least intelligent or least influential portion of the community in Scotland, notwithstanding many great and calamitous vicissitudes, have still adhered to the original constitution of their Church ; have

still desired to retain a ministry such as in England has never ceased to be retained—not by individuals only, but by the nation itself—except during the interval of the great Rebellion. That when they were in the ascendant, our forefathers used their authority meekly and moderately—in times when meekness or moderation were not to be found on any side—is not maintained : on the contrary, that they too often did the very reverse, is freely confessed and penitently deplored. But it is maintained that, whatever may have been their faults or excesses in that respect, these were no necessary consequence, no proper fruit, of the system itself which they so misused. Nor when we speak of adherence to a prelatical Church, is it to be understood that we desire to weaken—still less to exclude—either government by synods, or the just influence of the laity ; both of which it has been the wisdom of the presbyterian system to vindicate and uphold, and which we believe to be no less Scriptural and apostolical than prelacy itself. Neither do we desire to see the ecclesiastical element in the State unduly subjected to the civil element ; any more than we desire to see the civil power oppressed and overridden by the ecclesiastical ; and any advantage which Scotland may possess, more especially in the former of these respects, we should wish not only to be maintained in this country, but to be extended to England also. On the other hand, we have no wish to see repeated in this country sundry inconveniences which still attach to the Southern Church ; such as the monstrous, unmanageable size of the larger

attended by
failings in
the past
which are
now de-
plored.

What kind
of prelacy is
desired.

dioceses¹—an evil deplored by none more than by many of the bishops themselves ; the virtual abeyance of synodical action, and consequently of an important portion of the rights, both of the lower orders of the clergy and also of the laity ; and the substitution of multitudinous and often jarring societies for the action of the Church itself.

Prelatical
abuses no
necessary
part of the
system
itself.

Yes ; let it be repeated, again and again, that while we advocate, upon the grounds which have been stated and for the good of all, the due recognition of a prelatical ministry, we would yield to no one in condemning prelatical abuses of all kinds—prelatical exorbitances, prelatical despotism. And yet, though this avowal be frankly made, let it be borne in mind that neither personal delinquencies, however great, nor general corruption, however dominant, would seem (so far as we can learn from Scripture) to justify a departure from the system itself, the administration of which is so dishonoured. *Even a Judas must have a successor.* The ancient prophets, severely as they denounced the degeneracy of the Jewish priesthood, never counselled separation from them.² Our Blessed Lord Himself gave command to

¹ It was wisely urged by John Knox, more than three centuries ago, in his ‘Brief Exhortation to England,’ A.D. 1559 : ‘Let no man be charged in preaching of Christ Jesus above that which one man may do ; I mean that *your bishoprics be so divided*, that of every one, as they be now for the most part, be made ten.’ A sufficient evidence that

he at least did not wish to see episcopacy abolished but well reformed. See Works, vol. v. p. 515; comp. ‘Irenicum,’ p. 415; and Bingham, vol. ix. p. 412 sq.

² See St. Augustin, Ep. xciii.: ‘Toleraverunt Prophetæ contra quos tanta dicebant, nec communio-nem sacramentorum illius populi relinquebant.’—Vol. ii. p. 354.

His disciples that even the scribes and Pharisees, abominable hypocrites and false teachers as they were, should be still obeyed and respected in the exercise of their authority, because they sat in Moses' seat.¹ It will be admitted that these remarks belong naturally to the argument upon which we have been engaged. In point of fact, however, it cannot, I believe, be truly said that prelacy has ever been rejected in this country simply for its own demerits.² In 1560 it was rejected because it had been allied with popery. In 1638 it was rejected in consequence of the unconstitutional means by which Charles I. attempted to force upon the people the acceptance of a liturgy. In 1690 it was rejected because the bishops, who were then its representatives, refused to acknowledge King William III. as the legitimate sovereign of these realms.

May it not, then, be allowed to us to hope that nearly two centuries of exclusion from its just position may have sufficed to atone not only for the mistake—the loyal and not ignoble mistake—which it then made, but also for the other misdeeds and shortcomings of which it is acknowledged to have been guilty in its days of power? May it not be allowed to us to hope that this Christian appeal in its behalf will meet with some consideration from the Christian conscience of the people of this land? The appeal to *them*—to them as Christians—is not uncalled for, because

¹ Matt. xxiii. 1-3. See St. Chrysostom on 1 Thess., Hom. x. 1; and on Coloss., Hom. iii. 4.

² See Bishop Sage, 'Presbytery Examined,' p. 306, and compare his pathetic appeal (1695), p. 399.

Appeal to
the people
of Scotland.

* we have been assured by no mean authority that the General Assembly, whatever else it may be induced to alter or relax, must never be expected to move a hand towards opening the doors by which—I will not say *we*—but *the Catholic and apostolic ministry* is now excluded from all entrance into the National Church, as by law established. The appeal *itself* is not uncalled for; because the consummation of the union with England has given to the discussion which it raises an augmented interest, which cannot but find an echo in the breast of every true Christian, and which no true patriot will be slow to recognise. It will be felt by such that the advantages of that union must be incomplete so long as united action in religious matters is rendered impossible by the discordancy which exists between the two Church establishments as they now stand. It is true they are both Protestant. But so is Independency, so is Anabaptism, so is Socinianism, so is Unitarianism, so is Quakerism. And is it not true that in the past they have protested against each other, almost as vehemently as either of them has protested against Rome? Is it not the fact that each country harbours in its bosom allies of the other's Church which are, not from choice, but from necessity, the foes of its own? What power upon earth can reconcile this melancholy, this disastrous state of things? Again I say, THE POWER OF TRUTH. Only ascertain the truth as (I am sure) it can be ascertained, and act upon it as (I am sure) it can be acted on, and harmony will ensue. Otherwise, we must be prepared not only for the continuance of the same evil consequences which

Advantages
of the union
between the
two coun-
tries incom-
plete.

have been pointed out, and for their propagation (if they remain unchecked) in an aggravated form ; but for the addition of others still more calamitous, when the punishments which will be due to national apostacy are to fall upon us.

At least, then, let us hear no more that the matter is a small or unimportant one, when the results involved in it are such that it would be impossible to conceive any greater or more momentous. Neither let us be told that certainty in respect to it, sufficient for all practical purposes, is not to be obtained, when, if we take in the evidence as a whole, inspired and uninspired, what is there which has been more plainly manifested? What is there in regard to which we are placed under stronger obligations to obey the guidance which reason, Scripture, and experience combine to offer? Nor, once more, let us be told—as Edward Stillingfleet, when a youth of twenty-four, told the readers of his ‘Irenicum,’ but afterwards, when his knowledge had been enlarged, and his judgment matured, confessed that he had yielded more than the truth allowed¹—let us not be told that because good and learned men have been ranged on either side as disputants on this question, therefore the question is one which may and ought to be looked upon as indifferent. For what is the real truth in regard to the premiss upon which this conclusion rests? The truth is, the dispute has *not* been simply between opponents equally

Importance
of results
involved in
this appeal.

¹ See ‘Irenicum,’ p. 2 sq. ; and comp. Life prefixed to the folio edition of his works, vol. i. p. 4. See also above, p. 38, note 1.

good and learned, but between the judgment and practice of the universal Church on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the private opinion of individuals, influenced in great measure by considerations external to the merits of the case itself.

Condition of
the Church
of England
not really
a discour-
aging one.

Meanwhile I am aware that there are some who would call off our thoughts from the state of our own country, and even from the crisis now arisen in Ireland, in order to ask, with little feeling of good-will, whether the Church of England itself be not tottering to its fall. For my own part, I entertain no such opinion. On the contrary, I am persuaded that, if left to itself, if saved from the disturbing effects caused, through Parliament or otherwise, by the operation of Scotch or of Irish influences, its security, in its established position, in the present and for the future, would be as great or greater than it has ever been. I am sure there never was a time when its bishops and clergy, taken upon the whole, have been more devoted to their sacred calling. That in a body of men amounting to upwards of 20,000 some are to be found who, in a stirring and unsettled age like this, are, from motives of various kinds, bad and good, unable to resist the temptation of extreme opinions, or extreme practices—this can occasion no surprise. But, for the most part, the symptom which the body itself exhibits is the healthiest of all symptoms; viz. a desire for its own self-improvement, with a view to its greater and more effective usefulness. And the consequence is, that the influence of the clergy in England—notwithstanding the unhappy draw-

backs to which I have referred—was never at a greater height. I will not ask you to accept this statement upon my authority, but upon authority which will, I believe, be thought sufficient. A liberal journal of high repute, averse to any but the broadest sentiments upon matters of religion, gave expression to the following strong and distinct testimony in December last (1868) :—

‘This is, we think, the fair and legitimate inference to be drawn from the (late) elections :—that the Church of England is not tottering, nor likely to totter ; that it is planted deep in the affections of the English people.’—*Spectator.*

The speech of Mr. Gladstone at Greenwich, upon his re-election in the same month, contained a declaration of opinion precisely similar but in fuller terms ; when his own feelings or interests might have tempted him rather to question or suppress the truth. He is reported to have said :—

‘The elections have undoubtedly shown a strong attachment, on the part of the great body of the people in England, to the Church of England. And I am glad of that attachment, and of the great influence of the clergy ; though I venture to think they have used their influence improperly. I am glad, however, that it has been gained in the main by the conviction that the clergy do their duty. They may differ—there may be wise men and foolish men among them ; but, speaking generally, they are men in earnest ; they are men who attract the respect of the people by

Testimony
of a Liberal
journal.

Of the Prime
Minister.

working hard in their vocation. The Church of England, it may be truly said, ministers to the people ; less so, perhaps, in these great centres of the population, where it is relatively weakest, but, taking the country as a whole, *the Church of England ministers to the people.* (Cheers.) Doing so, it is appreciated.'

It is important to bear in mind that these words not only proceeded from a speaker who had far more reason to flatter the dissenting interest, but were addressed to one of those overgrown suburban populations in which the Church labours under greatest disadvantage ; and that their truth appears to have been acknowledged by those who heard them.

Adjustment
of ministry
would lead
to greater
harmony
of doctrine
and worship.

I said at the beginning that if this question, which affects the constitution of the ministry, could be first adjusted, I should anticipate comparatively little difficulty in the solution of others, the importance of which, though they have been merely touched upon in subordination to this, it must not be supposed that I am either capable of forgetting or willing to underrate. I am led to entertain the hope which I have expressed from various considerations. In the history of the past, since the Reformation, I find a general concurrence between Episcopalian and Presbyterians in the use of the same doctrinal standards to a great extent, even at the periods when their antagonism upon the question of Church government was at its height. On the one hand, it is certain that John Knox must have signed the Articles of

the Church of England ;¹ and in the following century it appears from what occurred in the Westminster Assembly that the same Articles were not unacceptable even to the Independents ;² while, at the present time, it is not uncommon, I believe, among Presbyterians, to require the standard work of Bishop Pearson on the Creed to be studied as the principal text-book by candidates for the ministry. On the other hand, the old Scotch Confession of 1560, the work of Knox and his fellow-reformers, was allowed by Episcopalianists during the period both of their first and second establishment.³ In regard to questions of worship, the experience of the present leaves no room to doubt that a gradual approximation of sentiment is setting in, before which it may be hoped that existing barriers, which exclude even the partial use of a liturgy, will eventually disappear. To these considerations it is to be added that the promoters of the change at the Revolution in 1690, so far as they were actuated by religious motives, professed to take account of no other differences between their own party and the party of the Church which they disestablished, but such only as concerned the constitution of the ministry ; and even these,

¹ See the author's 'Discourse on Scottish Reformation,' p. 36 sq.

² 'The Independents professed to agree with the Church of England in its Articles.'—Hetherington's *History of the Westminster Assembly*, p. 137. The Assembly spent ten weeks

in debating upon the first fifteen Articles, but 'that part of their proceedings led to no practical result.'

Ibid., p. 122.

³ See Bishop Russell's 'Appendix to Keith,' p. 492.

by their own avowal, they regarded in the light of popular feeling—not to say of popular prejudice—as it existed at the time, rather than of any judgment professing to be formed upon conviction of the truth.

Motives of
the author
in making
this appeal.

But whatever may be the weight which is due to these last remarks, for myself I shall feel that I have ample cause to be more than satisfied if I may succeed in recommending what I believe to be the first great instrument of unity ; if I may assist, however feebly or remotely, in obtaining a triumph for the truth upon the single point which has formed the main subject of this appeal. God is witness that I have not argued, and pressed the matter upon your attention, for the sake of victory, or of self-interest, nor from any other motive, but such as may become a lover of his country and a minister of the Gospel of the Prince of Peace. In every discussion, in every controversy in which I have engaged with the same object in view, it has never been my aim to detract from the esteem in which some who have differed from me are deservedly held ; and I have often declined an encounter, or desisted from it at an apparent disadvantage, when I saw that nothing was to be gained but the paltry satisfaction of exposing the errors or the weakness of an opponent, with no prospect of benefit to the cause itself. That cause, if it be of man, will come to nought ; but if it be of God—as I humbly but confidently trust it is—of His Spirit, and of His Truth, then, though I myself may not live to see any ripened fruit of my own labours, yet,

when the time of harvest shall arrive, others will enter into those labours ; and God grant, of His infinite mercy, that both sower and reaper may rejoice together in a better—a peaceful and united—world ! Meanwhile, you will not, I am sure, grudge to me the indulgence of feelings which a descendant, however unworthy, of an ancient and honourable lineage may be allowed to entertain, if in any way I have contributed to remove the thick cloud of misapprehension and mistrust under which episcopacy in this country has been doomed to lie. It is sometimes seen in the generations of this world, that while succession to the title has been retained by the rightful heir, the property has gone to another and less legitimate branch of the same family. I think I have shown that something like this has happened in the present case. At the same time, without seeking to extenuate the failings of our ancestors, I venture to claim for them the remembrance of services which shed lustre upon many a page of our country's history (witness the names of Turgot and of Kennedy, of Elphinstone and of Forbes, of Gawin Douglas and of Leighton) ; and which reach upward to the time when our first forefathers were converted from the worship of idols to serve, in the faith of Christ, the One living and true God. It only remains for me to add that as Luther, when excommunicated, appealed to the pope, ‘ melius informando ’—that is, in the hope that the time would come when he would be accessible to a fuller and purer knowledge of the Gospel—so we, being

Bishops who
have de-
served well
of their
Church and
country.

excluded from the pale of the National Church establishment in this country (though not in England), appeal to the enlightened consciences of our fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians to do us justice, and at the same time to do justice to themselves and to the sacred cause of ‘**TRUTH, UNITY, AND CONCORD.**’

PRA YER FOR UNITY.

O GOD, the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace, give grace to us and to all Thy people in this land, seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may seek henceforth to be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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